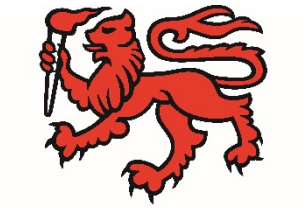

Listening to the Mentor Teacher's Voice

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
University of Tasmania July, 2020

Declaration of Originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief it contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright.

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Statement of Ethical Conduct

The research associated with this thesis abides by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator, and the rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University. The ethics application was approved (HI 3871 March 17th 2014) and the research was also approved by the Department of Education (2014 -12).

Signature

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Date: 10th July 2020

Abstract

Globally researchers acknowledge that the mentor teacher role is a vital component of initial teacher education. Yet when it comes to the actual lived experience of mentor teachers, and what they believe is important to being effective in their role, the available literature is largely silent. This thesis has two main goals: first, to address this silence by listening to the mentor teacher voice, and second, to provide practical knowledge for all those involved in initial teacher education.

A five-year partnership program between a department of education and a regional university in Tasmania, Australia provided an important opportunity to learn from mentor teachers. A case study approach was adopted using the method of interviews and 30 mentor teachers accepted an invitation to participate. The site of the case study saw the placement of selected pre-service teachers in a small number of socially and economically disadvantaged schools for a year. This was very different to the much shorter block practice sessions the mentor teachers were accustomed to and this extended period provided a fertile context for exploring what these mentor teachers had been learning about the art of teaching about teaching. Hence, the research question asked: *How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?*

Analysis of the interview data interpreted three dynamic and interwoven themes as the key findings: being relational, being intentional and being reflective. Central to the interweaving of the themes is the organising concept of relational responsibility. That is, conscious and intentional care for the relationship was core to becoming

teachers of teaching. The data revealed nuanced variations in the ways participants understood the relevance of each of these core themes and the extent to which they assumed relational responsibility. These subtle variations provide valuable insights into what is crucial to a mentor teacher becoming a teacher of teaching.

This research asserts that the voices of mentor teachers are critical for improving the mentoring role. Schools and classrooms are demanding, complex and often ambiguous and uncertain places. It is only from the situated lived experience of mentor teachers that a deeper understanding of their role can be gained. As this study demonstrates, the rich and deep insights of mentor teachers fills an important gap in the literature on teacher education and can consequently inform the policy and practice of the school-based component of initial teacher education. The study also points to the potential for research that in partnership with mentor teachers seeks to understand further the granular aspects that make a difference to being a teacher of teaching.

The findings of this study will be of interest to mentor teachers, school leaders, major school employers, education researchers, and university initial teacher educator course coordinators.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my beloved mother Frances Maude Dean (1919 -1977), an inspiring teacher and a passionate life-long learner. It is to her example that I owe my professional decision to become a teacher and the encouragement to orient myself always as a learner, prepared to take risks and to "enjoy the challenge."

Acknowledgments

This thesis could not have been completed without the generous support, encouragement and love of a number of important people.

I am deeply grateful for the patience, friendship, and guidance provided by my academic supervisors, Dr. Kerry Howells and Emeritus Professor John Williamson. From the beginning of this journey they demonstrated confidence in both the worthwhileness of this project and my ability to complete it. Throughout they provided wise counsel, inspiration, challenge and continuous supportive feedback. They invited me to think deeply and this thesis is the better for their questions, wonderings and perseverance. I have been privileged to learn with them. Thank you.

I acknowledge with gratitude the mentor teachers who agreed to participate in this project. They were all extremely generous in sharing their experience of mentoring pre-service teachers and provided the detail from which to learn. I have aimed to do justice to their voices.

The collegiality of the Education Faculty and the other higher degree students in Hobart has been incredibly important and valuable. Their interest and care kept my motivation flowing. They provided a safe academic community that facilitated the honest sharing of doubts as well as joyous celebrations. Thank you everyone.

I could not have been immersed in this journey without the love and enduring support of my family: from afar my children Sam, Nell and Jess invited me to “enjoy the challenge” and my dearly loved husband Rod has been constant in his belief, support and love, making all possible.

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Chapter 1

Introduction, Context and Background

1.1 Introduction

This research is a case study that explores how 30 teachers, who accepted responsibility for mentoring pre-service teachers in their classrooms for a year, understood their mentoring role. The study prioritises their lived experience as mentor teachers and the insights to be gained from listening to their voices. The purpose is to critically analyse and learn from their insights such that the school-based component of initial teacher education can be enhanced and improved.

This chapter introduces the background to the study. It explains how my curiosity about the role of teachers who mentor pre-service teachers came about. The chapter provides background information about the educational context for the study, including the local initiative in which these mentor teachers participated. The chapter goes on to describe how the study problem emerged, what the study is intended to achieve and a rationale for why it matters to learn from the participants in this study.

Finally, this chapter describes the selected research approach and provides an outline of the thesis chapters.

1.2 Background

Most researchers acknowledge the significant place the time spent in schools holds for pre-service teachers within their initial teacher education course (Franke & Dahlgren, 1996; Hennissen, Crasborn, Brouwer, Korthagen, & Bergen, 2011; Kriewaldt, Ambrosetti, Rorrison, & Capeness, 2018; Le Cornu, 2016; Ponte & Twomey, 2014). Nevertheless, within the swirl of debate around what constitutes quality teacher education, it is the core matter of the quality of this school-based time that researchers declare to be the most problematic and a "wicked problem" (Southgate, Reynolds, & Howley, 2013). In the international discussions about improving teacher education it is the amount of time, the use of that time, and the outcomes to be expected from this time that receive the most attention (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Hagger & McIntyre, 2006; Southgate et al., 2013; Zeichner, 2010). At the heart of this "wicked problem" is the role of the teachers who work with pre-service teachers in schools (Edwards & Protheroe, 2003). Nevertheless it is these teachers' voices that are missing "in the study of the practicum" (Clift, 2017, p. 225).

Policy publications and research advocate for pre-service teachers to spend more time in schools (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG), 2015; Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Hartsuyker, 2007) and argue that more purposeful time in classrooms and schools should be central to teacher training (TEMAG, 2015; Barber & Mourshed, 2007). This advocacy derives from a long history of valuing the practical as the primary source for knowledge about teaching (Lortie, 1975; Waller, 1932). Furthermore, pre-service teachers claim their time in schools to be the most

useful part of their course (Feiman-Nemser, 2012; White, Bloomfield, & Le Cornu, 2010).

The local response to this advocacy for more time in schools was a program called the Partnerships in Teaching Excellence (PiTE) (see Appendix A for a list of abbreviations and acronyms). This program was the immediate context for this research. What follows provides an overview of the PiTE program and my role.

1.2.1 Partnerships in Teaching Excellence Program (PiTE)

The PiTE initiative was part of a formalised partnership agreement between a government department of education (Tasmanian Department of Education (DoE)) and the regional university (University of Tasmania) to place pre-service teachers in schools for a year, in addition to their block practice sessions of several weeks (Allen, Howells, & Radford, 2013; Oerlemans, 2017).

The Australian House of Representatives' inquiry into teacher education, *Top of the Class*, (Hartsuyker, 2007) emphasized that the quality of teaching is the most important school based factor influencing student achievement. In Australia this report promoted the creation of school-university partnerships and provided a rationale for the introduction of the federal government initiative *Smarter Schools: Improving Teacher Quality* (TQNP). This initiative provided the funding for the PiTE program.

The aim of PiTE was to prepare resilient, confident, capable, classroom-ready beginning teachers to teach in schools with a high Educational Needs Index (ENI). PiTE ran for five years and involved 14 Tasmanian schools: five secondary schools (grades 7-10), eight primary schools (grades Kindergarten (K) - 6) and one rural District school (grades K -10). The program selected a limited number of pre-service

teachers in the final year of their education degree (M. Teach. and B. Ed.) for an opportunity to spend additional time in these high ENI or hard-to-staff, low Social Economic Status (SES) and rural schools. This additional time amounted to around 40 days - a significant increase on the normal time given to pre-service teachers in schools, which in Tasmania is generally around 60 days.

The scholarship selection process for the pre-service teachers was competitive and included a written application, referee reports and an interview. Academic results and practicum assessment records were taken into account. The selected pre-service teachers, the majority of whom were M. Teach. post graduates, received a stipend during their internship and, on successful completion of their scholarship year, were guaranteed employment in a department school. Several pre-service teachers were usually placed in a school and each was allocated to a separate mentor teacher. Hence the PiTE program was an opportunity to investigate, from mentor teachers' viewpoints, what was involved in teaching pre-service teachers to teach.

From the beginning of 2009 I was appointed DoE manager of the PiTE program while the University of Tasmania's Education Faculty appointed an academic to oversee the program from the Faculty's perspective. The academic taught a unit that, in building on the experience provided for the pre-service teachers by the additional time, gave credit towards their degree.

During the PiTE program the teachers coordinating the program in each school were called *mentor teachers*. These teachers were provided with time equivalent to 0.2 to coordinate and professionally support the pre-service teachers in their school. The teachers, in whose classrooms the pre-service teachers were placed, were called *colleague teachers*. However, in the first few years of the PiTE program the teachers designated mentor teachers also took a pre-service teacher into their

classrooms. In the negotiations with schools wishing to participate in PiTE it was stipulated that mentor teachers would remain classroom teachers and have a pre-service teacher with them in their classroom as well as providing support to pre-service teachers allocated to other classroom teachers. Nevertheless, by the program's end, while a few mentor teachers continued in this dual role, others began to assume additional roles outside the classroom and sometimes ceased to have a pre-service teacher with them in their classroom.

1.2.2 Terms Used in This Thesis

When they were involved with PiTE the participants in this study had roles labelled either colleague or mentor teacher. Some teachers assumed both roles and this is illustrated in Table 3.1 in Chapter 3, *Methodology*. The primary focus of this study is how all of these teachers understood the educational nature of their work with pre-service teachers. Hence from this point on the collective label mentor teacher is used for all participants. Where I need to distinguish between the roles (and this is in very few places in the thesis) a mentor teacher taking on the more leadership aspect is referred to as a lead mentor.

Other terms include:

- The University students in the final year of their education courses are called pre-service teachers.
- The children or pupils in the classroom are called students (whether they are in infant or secondary classes).
- Through the thesis, where it is necessary to distinguish it from other studies, this case study is referred to as the PiTE study.

1.3 The PiTE Journey

The PiTE program ran from 2009 to 2013. Pre-service teachers were allocated to their schools from the beginning of the school year, at the beginning of February, for one day a week. For some, this included the last few days of January, so they could assist their mentor teacher set up their classroom. The first block practicum of three weeks was before the end of term 1. In term 2 the pre-service teachers began attending their schools for two days a week and the final practicum of four weeks took place at the end of their academic year in October. Many continued in their schools voluntarily (and in a paid capacity) until the school year ended just before Christmas.

1.3.1 The Early Days

Very early in the first year of the PiTE program questions emerged about how the mentor teachers understood their role. The pre-service teachers were concerned that they were being asked to spend their day in the school teaching. The planning for this was competing with their ongoing course work at the university and the required assignment load. A meeting was called in March to clarify expectations and to explore how to ensure connections with their university course work.

This March meeting indicated it was not only the mentor teachers who lacked clarity about how the extra time in schools might be best used. As the PiTE manager I left the meeting asking myself many questions, including:

- Why did the mentor teachers expect the pre-service teachers to spend the day teaching?
- What assumptions and beliefs lay behind this expectation?

- As a manager of the program, what assumptions was I making about my own understanding about what should be happening in the schools?

I reflected too on my own past experience, many years previously, as a mentor teacher. How uncertain I had been about what the role entailed and how vague I was about what there was to communicate about teaching. Might the teachers in the PiTE schools also feel uncertain, about what they were being asked to take on? What challenges were involved in moving from having pre-service teachers for short blocks of time to having them with you for a year? In other words, I began to wonder what assumptions all of us at that meeting (pre-service teachers; university staff; Department staff and mentor teachers) were making about this role that played such an important part in initial teacher education. In my role what support did I need to be providing? How might a better understanding of what the mentor teacher role entailed enhance my support?

Although the partnership between the DoE and the University of Tasmania had been formalised in a written agreement, in practice the partner organisations were initially working separately. The March meeting highlighted that there were neither guidelines that communicated clear expectations nor clarity about how this additional time in schools connected with the pre-service teachers' university commitments. The assumption was that classroom teachers selected as mentor teachers would know how to use this time appropriately. However, the March meeting made it clear that these teachers required greater clarity about roles and specific advice about how to use purposefully the pre-service teachers' regular additional time in schools.

1.3.2 Review of the First PiTE Year

The lack of clarity around roles and expectations was further reinforced by a review of PiTE conducted during 2009 by a retired department educator. The review was part of an agreement with the Australian Education Union (AEU). In the initial negotiations that established PiTE the union had expressed concerns about the perceived extra workload being required of its members and requested a review at the end of the first year. The review was generally very positive and the AEU agreed to continue their support over the subsequent years. The review recorded the following matters relating to the mentor teacher role:

- several pre-service teachers noted that their mentor teacher needed more information about the PiTE program, more clarity about roles and expectations was required;
- some pre-service teachers noted that their colleague teacher "didn't know much" and "They didn't realize they were going to have a student teacher in their classroom for big blocks of time";
- mentor teachers noted a lack of clarity around their role;
- mentor teachers noted they needed more support in understanding how best to use the time in schools; and
- mentor teachers needed professional learning in coaching, conflict resolution and giving feedback (Freestone, 2009).

These comments underlined the lack of clarity about expectations that surfaced in March and also revealed communication issues within schools. With layers of uncertainty and ambiguity it was understandable that this group of teachers defaulted to the familiar practices they understood from the short block practicums

that were the norm in Tasmania. That is, they expected their pre-service teacher to spend the majority of their time teaching.

The data from the review also suggested a degree of tentativeness around approaching teachers to sign up for having a pre-service teacher in their classrooms for more time than the regular university practicums. These interviews surfaced concerns about the number of 'good' teacher models. There was a problem, particularly in the smaller schools, "finding really good classroom support teachers who can act as role models for student teachers" (Freestone, 2009, p. 52). The concern appeared to be in finding sufficient teachers who met their criteria for being "a good classroom support teacher". This thread of concern about good teacher models was underlined by comments by some pre-service teachers. Both teachers and pre-service teachers commented on how critical it was to make the best choice of a teacher to be a mentor teacher.

1.3.3 Professional Learning

To build intentionality, clarify expectations and facilitate our learning over the five years of the program (2009-2013) I initiated regular meetings with the lead mentor teachers and occasional meetings with the classroom mentor teachers. The Education Faculty's academic PiTE coordinator attended these meetings whenever possible. Guidelines and various support documents were prepared and distributed to mentor teachers and pre-service teachers.

Through the conversations at the meetings with the lead mentor teachers it became clear that the assumption that experienced teachers are skilled at communicating the thinking behind their practice and designing a learning program for novices was more problematic than implied in the policy documents and advocacy

for pre-service teachers to spend more time in schools. A feature of much mentor teacher practice in the first year of PiTE was, as has been reported in the literature (for instance Hall, Draper, Smith, & Bullough, 2008; Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009), a sometimes reluctant giving over of space for unguided practice of teaching. Part of the challenge then was to talk in terms of the mentor teacher role as being a teacher of teaching, of them being school based teacher educators (Feiman-Nemser, 2012). This in turn meant working with the lead mentor teachers about how they might support their colleagues in planning to use the additional time in purposeful ways.

In addition to the regular meetings there were professional learning opportunities. From 2009 professional learning in Cognitive Coaching (Costa & Garmston, 2002) was provided each year and the mentor teachers were encouraged to participate. Cognitive Coaching was an eight-day commitment and included learning about conducting planning and reflecting conversations, working with problems of practice and providing feedback. In 2012 further professional learning was provided for the lead mentor teachers in observing practice, recognizing and managing bias, collecting evidence of practice and using evidence as a basis for feedback.

1.4 The Problem, Rationale and Purposes

At the beginning it was clear that the proponents of PiTE, including myself, did not sufficiently understand what was involved for the classroom teachers who accepted the mentor teacher role. Nevertheless, over the years of the PiTE program we all learned to be more explicit and the mentor teachers were clearly building their expertise in teaching pre-service teachers to teach. Evidence of success could be seen in the way principals of PiTE schools were enthusiastic in continuing their

involvement with the program and school principals, both in and outside PiTE were keen to employ the PiTE graduates. In addition the program was awarded an *Australian Universities Vice Chancellors' Award: For Programs that Enhance Learning and Research.* In support of the application for this award positive endorsement was documented from pre-service teachers, mentor teachers, principals and faculty academics. Success here was judged primarily from the pre-service teachers' point of view. There was still much to learn from the mentor teachers.

1.4.1 The Problem

As the DoE PiTE manager I realised I knew very little about how the mentor teachers were evolving an understanding of their mentoring role. How, I wondered, might an enhanced understanding, from the perspective of the mentor teachers, facilitate both policy and practical directions around providing pre-service teachers with more time in schools, and the professional learning for the teachers involved?

Hence this case study was an opportunity to understand from the participants' viewpoints what their expertise entailed and how they understood it.

1.4.2 Rationale and Purposes

Placing the selected pre-service teachers in hard to staff schools for a year was motivated by the need to have "classroom-ready" graduates for these schools. As such PiTE was a recruitment exercise and, the danger as White et al., (2010, p. 184) point out, is that the priority can be on 'talent spotting' rather than on the potential for improving both teaching and mentoring. When recruitment is the priority there is the danger, as documented above, that department managers, and even school principals, will make assumptions that experience as a classroom teacher is adequate preparation for effective mentoring of pre-service teachers. An enthusiasm for having more time

in schools appears to be accompanied by a naïve belief that this in itself will be sufficient for the purpose of learning to teach and hence for a successful recruitment program. Furthermore, in some places "more time in schools" was becoming an easy and uncontested slogan.

What I was beginning to understand through my role as PiTE DoE manager was that there was much to learn. My bias at the time was to provide guidelines to clarify expectations and I had a sense that a better understanding of the mentor teacher role could inform a learning to teach curriculum. My previous experience as a professional learning leader had provided me with insights into the potential for co-constructing meaning with teachers and the limitations of my understanding of the classroom as an outsider. Hence, my professional experience had taught me that there was great value in listening to participants directly entrusted with teaching pre-service teachers to teach.

Understanding the mentor teachers' perspective about teaching pre-service teachers to teach is important because their insights are necessary to inform policy and practical decisions in initial teacher education. Their voices are needed to understand the immense complexity of the processes involved. The clinical component is recognised as vital to teacher preparation but continues to be critiqued as "the least intentional component of the process" (Gareis & Grant, 2014). It is the mentor teachers who are best placed to improve this situation provided their voices are accorded respect and authority.

It is also important to understand the challenges involved in teaching pre-service teachers to teach in school settings if those outside the classroom are to provide appropriate just in time professional learning support. The mentor teachers' perspective is vital for negotiating ongoing support and areas for further learning.

The purpose of this study is to learn from the teachers who accepted responsibility for teaching pre-service teachers to teach in the PiTE program. The study aims to gain insights into the attitudes, beliefs and assumptions that underpinned their mentoring decisions. In broad terms what were they learning about becoming a teacher of teaching? These insights will in turn inform:

- an understanding of what is involved in developing a learning to teach curriculum;
- the professional learning provided to teachers taking on mentoring roles with pre-service teachers;
- policy that advocates for pre-service teachers to spend more of their course time in schools, including future partnerships between ITE institutions and schools; and
- ITE educators who work with mentor teachers in schools about what the role entails.

1.5 Research Question

The broad research question is:

How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?

1.6 Overview of the Thesis

This thesis is comprised of eight chapters. Chapter One introduced the background to the PiTE study and described the study problem, provided a rationale and the purposes for the study.

The literature review forms the second chapter. This critical discussion reviews the extant literature on the mentor teacher role and focuses in particular on the extent to which the role has been understood as 'educative'. The chapter highlights the research that has found the role problematic and also research that suggests more optimistic ways forward for a role that is increasingly playing a significant part in initial teacher education. Furthermore, this chapter provides a conceptual framework that informs and guides answering the research question.

Chapter three describes the methodology and research design. This PiTE study takes an interpretive case study approach designed to maximise the potential to learn from the PiTE mentor teachers. More information is provided in this chapter about the participants in this PiTE study. The ethical issues are outlined and the data collection and analysis processes are described in this chapter.

Chapters four to six present the findings of this research. The findings are explained through the three themes interpreted from the interview data: Being Relational, Being Intentional and Being Reflective. Chapters four to six take one of these themes and present the key findings, primarily through the voices of the mentor teachers.

Chapter seven discusses the key insights to emerge from the findings and analyses these insights guided by an organising concept: relational responsibility.

The final chapter, Chapter eight presents the conclusions and recommendations that emerge from this research.

Chapter 2

Understanding the Mentor Teacher Role: A Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature that examines the role of the teachers who work with pre-service teachers. In this literature the teacher with responsibility for a pre-service teacher is most frequently called a ‘mentor’ and the process is described as ‘mentoring’. The purpose of this literature review is to critically examine how this role has been discussed in the scholarly literature; to note the extent to which mentor teachers’ voices contribute to our understanding of the role; and to develop a conceptual framework to guide this case study.

Reading the scholarly literature in this chapter began while managing the PiTE program and continued throughout the research including during the analysis and writing processes. The literature has been sourced, primarily from international peer reviewed journals. The process of sourcing included using ERIC, ProQuest, Google

Scholar and the bibliographies of scholarly books and articles. The review includes the work of Australian scholars and also those from Finland, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom. Some are quantitative studies, for instance Crasborn, Hennissen. Brouwer, Korthagen, and Bergen (2008), others are comparative studies (e.g.Heikkinen, Wilkinson, Aspfors, & Bristol, 2018; Tillema, Smith, & Leshem, 2011; Wang, 2001), and many are qualitative case studies.

Across the studies, and across the countries and cultures there are some broad areas of agreement. Firstly a concern held by initial teacher educators that the potential for the school-based time is often not realised (e.g.Valencia et al., 2009); secondly there is an emphasis on the complex relational nature of the mentoring role (e.g.Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010); and thirdly, that a better understanding of the mediating nature of the role will be critical for supporting the improvement of mentoring practice (e.g.Orland-Barak, 2014). The comparative studies, however, suggest that wider cultural, political, policy and ethical considerations influence both the preoccupations of researchers and the way mentor teachers understand their role in particular school contexts. Hence differences between cultures cannot be overlooked when generalisations are made about the mentor teacher role.

Under researched in the literature, however, are the insights from the teachers who take on the mentor teacher role. Over twenty years ago Cochran-Smith and Paris (1995) claimed that "mentoring has the greatest potential to contribute to reform in teacher education" (p. 182), but only if the concept is reconceptualised. They went on to argue that mentoring must be based on an epistemology that "includes teachers' ways of knowing and acting about teaching" (p. 184). More recently mentor teachers have been called "passive participants" (Leshem, 2014) in initial teacher education

and their views about mentoring and the practicum experience continue to be noted as missing in the literature (Clift, 2017). It remains important to respectfully bring mentor teachers' voices into discussions about how this role can be more intentionally pedagogical.

Thus central to this review of the literature is the extent to which mentor teachers understand their role as purposively educational. Three definitions of mentoring, that provide insights over time into the sophisticated and complex nature of the role, frame the review. Finally, this chapter interrogates the literature to demonstrate why understanding the mentor teachers' perspective and listening to their voices is imperative for learning how to enhance and improve this role such that the time pre-service teachers spend in schools is a productive experience in their professional development.

2.2 Role Ambiguity

Scholars have observed that ambiguity appears to surround the classroom teacher's role when they are assigned a pre-service teacher. In part this ambiguity arises from the connotations and perceptions that are invited by the various role names. In the literature, and in practice, the teacher's role has been variously named as supervising teacher; support teacher; cooperating teacher; colleague teacher; associate teacher; mentor teacher and, more recently, school-based teacher educator. Each of these labels communicates different role expectations and subsequently teachers, who take on a role with pre-service teachers, "hold a place within the teacher education community that remains unclear" (Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011, p. 434).

The names we select shape perceptions, understandings and subsequent behaviour, particularly when there are no guidelines, curriculum or a role description to guide mentoring practice. For instance, scholars have noted that when teachers understand their role as simply 'cooperating', the term implies little responsibility for the pre-service teacher's learning. Learning to teach has happened in the ITE institutions and cooperating "means nothing more than providing a place for the pre-service teacher to practice teaching and offering little support" (Hall et al., 2008, p. 343). When the prevailing view is that pre-service teachers are "renting space" or a "safe site" (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009) and are "guests" in the classrooms (Feiman-Nemser, 1998; Jaspers, Meijer, Prins, & Wubbels, 2014; Valencia et al., 2009) the priority for a cooperating teacher can be interpreted as keeping the peace and being polite rather than teaching about teaching (Cain, 2009). That is, teachers will not necessarily grasp an educator role when epistemological views privilege academic knowledge and "reflect a deficit view of the field" (Feiman-Nemser, 1998, p. 65).

This belief that learning to teach happens outside the classroom appears difficult to shift. Even when the term 'workplace learning' is used, researchers report it is "still often characterized as experiences that augment and support what is being taught in educational institutions instead of learning on its own terms" (van Velzen, Volman, Brekelmans, & White, 2012, p. 231). Thus the dominant view of professional knowledge is that it is "the application of scientific theory and technique to the instrumental problems of practice" (Schön, 1983, p. 30). It is the practical knowledge of the teacher (Zanting, Verloop, Vermunt, & Van Driel, 1998) taking on the mentor teacher role that remains absent from much of this discourse.

Whatever the label being used in schools, in the extant literature scholars increasingly talk about ‘mentor teachers’ and describe the process as ‘mentoring’. However, this role name has not, of itself, provided clarity about what the role entails and mentoring has been described as a confused concept (Colley, 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 1998; Sundli, 2007). Nevertheless, various definitions attempt to pin the concept down. The most traditional, with its echoes of Homer’s Mentor is, “the one-to-one support of a novice or less experienced practitioner by a more experienced practitioner” (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 207).

This definition, the first of three in this review chapter, implies that being a “more experienced practitioner” is sufficient preparation for the mentoring role. Scholars from several countries have demonstrated that this is not necessarily the case (Ambrosetti, 2014; Bullough, 2005; Gareis & Grant, 2014; Hennissen, Crasborn, Brouwer, Korthagen, & Bergen, 2008; Hobson et al., 2009; Le Cornu, 2012; Ponte & Twomey, 2014). These researchers share concerns that even well regarded teachers withhold advice and avoid reflective practices that might raise questions about their own and their pre-service teacher’s teaching (Bullough, 2005). Rather than providing an educative experience what is achieved is often merely a “weak exercise in vocational socialization” (Bullough, 2005, p. 144).

Hence being an experienced and effective teacher is “a necessary but not sufficient condition for being an effective mentor” (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 211). Nevertheless, the definition provided and critiqued by Hobson et al., (2009), carrying as it does traditional power hierarchies, is likely to be the vague sense that many teachers have for the idea of being a mentor (Le Cornu, 2005). In this way unexamined preconceptions are likely to frame a teacher’s understanding of what the mentor teacher role entails.

The concern of scholars is that some role names do not communicate an educative purpose for the teacher's time spent with a pre-service teacher. To address this concern the role name 'school-based teacher educator' has been used in some settings (for instance, Yendol-Hoppey, 2007). However, scholars report that some teachers respond negatively to this role title and indicate that they prefer to be known as a mentor, teacher or helper (E. White, Dickerson, & Weston, 2015, p. 454). This is because the role title does not, of itself, provide clarity about roles and responsibilities. Nor does it assuage teachers' sense of vulnerability and uncertainty about what the role entails. Hence, scholars (Hall et al., 2008; E. White et al., 2015) maintain, teachers lack the self-efficacy needed to assume what is implied by the teacher educator title.

This reluctance to accept a role name that attempts to communicate educative aspirations for the mentor teacher role suggests that there needs to be a shared understanding and clarification of the intended expectations for any label chosen for this role (E. White et al., 2015). Such a shared understanding involves the teachers who take on the role, their colleagues, pre-service teachers and the initial teacher educators working with schools (Haigh & Ward, 2004). When an educative outcome for pre-service teachers is the intention it is not sufficient to change the label and hope for the best (Bullough, 2005; Leshem, 2014).

In working towards providing an educative experience in the school-based component of initial teacher education it is essential to invest in establishing a clear understanding of what providing classroom experience means for the mentor teacher. Furthermore, it is important to critically examine how scholars have interpreted the challenges involved in meeting the aspiration to be educative. This is the focus for the following section.

2.3 Providing an Educative Experience

Providing an educative experience implies that mentor teachers have an intentional pedagogical interpretation of their role. They think about what is involved in learning to teach and purposefully sequence the learning. They understand themselves to be teachers of teaching. This requires a more complex understanding of learning from experience than that implied by common-sense views of being left to "sink or swim", or "politically popular" (Ellis, 2010, p. 111) notions of learning 'on-the-job', such as being advocated for in England and the United States (Ellis, 2010; Souto-Manning, 2019). It is a goal of this thesis to understand both how mentor teachers acquire this complex understanding and what might hinder its development.

Educative mentoring involves mentor teachers having a clear idea about the kind of teaching they want novices to learn (Feiman-Nemser, 1998, 2012). It "rests on an explicit vision of good teaching and an understanding of teacher learning" (Feiman-Nemser, 2012, p. 254). This concept of mentoring is therefore more sophisticated than Little's (1990a) observation that in her research the concept was generally understood to mean emotional support, technical advice and an opportunity for adjustments to the school context.

2.3.1 Reform-Minded Teaching

Researchers have long argued that teaching about teaching requires an understanding of the complexities and uncertainties endemic to teaching. This is challenging because teachers may not be able to explain why they teach the way they do. Teachers' knowledge of teaching is described as tacit (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006; Polanyi, 1962; Schön, 1983). However, having an explicit understanding of their

teaching as complex and problematic is viewed as essential for educative mentoring (Haigh & Ward, 2004; Loughran, 2007, 2009).

It is not only important for mentor teachers to understand teaching as complex and problematic. Scholars maintain they should also hold a vision of good teaching. Good teaching means reform-minded teaching (Wang & Odell, 2007). Teaching is reform-minded when it supports "students' active construction, discovery, sharing, and examination of knowledge in various subject contents" (Wang & Odell, 2007, p. 474). This is *not* teaching as knowledge transmission or 'delivery'.

Reform-minded teaching has been variously described as constructivist, learner centred, responsive, and teaching for understanding (Cohen, McLaughlin, & Talbert, 1993; Tharp, 1993). It is based on an understanding of how learning occurs and is responsive to student thinking (Ball & Cohen, 1999). It is teaching that aims to make learning visible and holds a commitment to assist all students to succeed (Hattie, 2012). Hence teachers must "suspend habitual notions that presume sameness" (Ball & Cohen, 1999, p. 9) and base their teaching on a deep understanding of diversity. This is demanding teaching and must be learned in practice because "teaching occurs in particulars – particular students interacting with particular teachers over particular ideas in particular circumstances" (Ball & Cohen, 1999, p. 10).

Reconceptualising teaching as complex and reform-minded, particularly the commitment to assist all students to succeed, has focused teacher educators' attention on enhancing and improving the mentoring of pre-service teachers. Wang and Odell (2007) argue:

> This shifting role of mentor-novice relationships from supporting novice teachers' smooth transition into the existing culture and practice

> of teaching to assisting novices as they learn to teach in reform-minded ways calls for a new conception of the relationships that consists both of the mission of the mentoring relationship and its complex reality (p. 475).

These are demanding aspirations for the mentor teacher role and pragmatic realities need to be better understood, by both scholars and teachers. As Wang and Odell (2007) point out, even teachers who are committed to reform-minded teaching may not understand what this means for their mentoring of a pre-service teacher. What is hoped for is that mentor teachers are able to create "goal directed action" (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988) in their classrooms for their adult learners hence making learning to teach in and from experience educative.

Mentoring, where mentor teachers see themselves as teachers of teaching, has the potential to help novices learn to teach in reform-minded ways (Norman & Feiman-Nemser, 2005; Orland-Barak, 2010). This involves mentor teachers having an informed view of how someone learns to teach.

2.3.2 Learning to Teach in and from Experience

Learning to teach in practice and from experience is a major component of initial teacher education (Kruger, Davies, Eckersley, Newell, & Cherednichenko, 2009; Lampert, 2010; Zeichner, 2012). Scholars assert that experience is vital because "it is in the processes of planning, teaching and evaluation that all other sources of knowledge on which one might draw come together in action and acquire meaning" (Hagger, Burn, Mutton, & Brindley, 2008, p. 166).

A key concern, noted by scholars as too simplistic, is "objectifying experience as a map" (Britzman, 1991, p. 7) that a pre-service teacher can follow without

mediation. The common slogan, “experience is the best teacher” is misleading and can eventuate in what Ellis (2010) calls an “impoverished understanding of experience” (p. 205). As Schwille (2008) succinctly comments “experience without guidance and reflection can be a fickle and misleading teacher” (p. 156). These observations imply that the concept ‘experience’ requires careful analysis because it is essential that mentor teachers understand their role as more than the provision of a “safe site” (Hobson et al., 2009) for practice. Nevertheless, there is little research that investigates what mentor teachers themselves mean when they talk about ‘learning to teach from experience’.

2.3.3 Understanding Learning to Teach as an Apprenticeship

Many teachers believe that pre-service teachers should be provided with more experience in schools and frequently call this an apprenticeship – the novice learning from the master (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006). This interpretation of an apprenticeship echoes the earlier definition of the mentor teacher role as support provided by “a more experienced practitioner” (Hobson et al., 2009). Embedded in such talk is usually an understanding that in addition to providing emotional support the mentor teacher will pass on their experience to the novice. Viewed positively, understanding mentoring from an apprenticeship perspective respects the contextual nature of learning to teach (Wang & Odell, 2007) and the craft knowledge of the mentoring teacher (Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992). However, as was noted above, scholars have found that being a more experienced practitioner does not necessarily translate into providing an educative experience for a pre-service teacher.

Indeed, interpreting the practicum as an apprenticeship has been a persistent concern for scholars because it privileges learning by observation and reproducing

what one sees. As long ago as 1904 Dewey wrote that a pre-service teacher is likely to adjust his (sic) approach to teaching:

> not on the principles which he is acquiring, but to what he sees succeed and fail in an empirical way from moment to moment: to what he sees other teachers doing who are more experienced and successful in keeping order than he is: and to the injunctions and directions given to him by others (Dewey, 1904/1965, p. 149).

This observation of what succeeds and fails in the classroom has, more recently (Schwille, 2008), been called an 'osmosis' approach to mentoring because the mentor teacher hopes the pre-service teacher "will see and pick up on something on his or her own" (p. 148). However, in order to interpret and make sense of what is observed a novice may draw, in an unquestioning way, on their years of being a student or their "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975). For Feiman-Nemser (2012) this is one of the pitfalls in learning to teach because "unquestioned familiarity… arrests thought and may mislead it" (p. 170). Keeping order, rather than the principles that underpin reform-minded teaching, may remain the priority for the pre-service teacher when their experience remains unmediated by their mentor teacher.

Hence an apprenticeship approach to learning to teach will not necessarily provide an educative experience for pre-service teachers. Indeed it has the potential to be mis-educative. Dewey's *Experience and Education* (1938), continues to provide the most detailed analysis of the concept 'experience' and informs an understanding of what it would mean for a mentor teacher to mediate experience in such a way that it becomes an educative one for their pre-service teacher.

For an experience to be understood as educative Dewey maintains two principles must be present: continuity and interaction. By 'continuity' Dewey is

talking about habits and attitudes, both emotional and intellectual that are formed over time. Some experiences will arrest and limit growth while, the quality of other experiences are the foundation for future learning. By 'interaction' Dewey means that an educator must demonstrate how their internal thinking interacts with what is observable. By implication, for a mentor teacher it is not simply performance that counts but the thinking behind and within the performance – the meaning making.

When Dewey's thinking is applied to mentor teachers his reasoning suggests they must attend to how pre-service teachers learn to teach, or what some scholars are calling the pedagogical aspect of mentoring. This means that mentor teachers require an "understanding [of] the problematic nature of teaching, how that influences teaching *and* learning about teaching, and *how* knowledge of such practice is developed from an evidential base" (Loughran, 2009, p. 199 emphasis in original).

2.3.4 Mentored Learning to Teach

Clearly we require a more sophisticated understanding about what it means to provide an educative experience. An apprenticeship reconceptualised as " mentored learning to teach" (Feiman-Nemser, 2012, p. 237) communicates an active meaning making role for the mentor teacher. Learning to teach is mediated and, ideally, the mentor teacher works at co-constructing meaning about teaching and student learning with their pre-service teacher.

The socio-cultural and critical constructivist theories that support this interpretation draw substantially on Vygotsky's (1978) work on learning as socially shared or distributed cognition (Daniels, 2001; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). As Tharp and Gallimore (1988) point out, teachers too have 'zones of proximal development' and require 'assisted performance' supported through 'scaffolding' (Wood, Bruner, &

Ross, 1976) and the 'gradual release of responsibility' (Vygotsky, 1978). These concepts imply mentor teachers are skilled observers and listeners, have an explicit understanding of 'good' teaching, are able to judge progress towards publicly agreed standards, and provide supported and mediated practice that is gradually more challenging for the novice (van Huizen, van Oers, & Wubbels, 2005).

Conceptualising educative experience as mentored learning to teach also draws on teaching described as a "cognitive apprenticeship" (Collins, Brown, & Holum, 1991; Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1989; Feiman-Nemser, 2012). The mentoring process moves from the replication of observed behaviour, such as Dewey criticised, to requiring, "the externalization of processes that are usually carried out internally" (Collins et al., 1989, p. 457). This use of the term 'apprenticeship', draws on Vygotsky's (1978) argument that learning is socially situated and resonates with Dewey's (1938) concept of 'interaction'. Informed by this thinking Feiman-Nemser (2012) describes learning to teach in situations where the mentor teachers "think aloud so that learners can not only observe their actions but also see how their teachers think about particular tasks or problems" (p. 266). The mentor teacher's role is to enable the pre-service teacher's 'legitimate peripheral participation', "of both absorbing and being absorbed in – the 'culture of practice'" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 95).

2.3.5 Considering the Challenges

Whatever the promise of socio-cultural theories some scholars are finding a number of challenges when these concepts are used to inform mentoring processes in classrooms. For instance, Wang and Odell (2002), in the United States, critique mentoring interpreted as an apprenticeship based on a situated perspective because of

their concern that the existing system will be reproduced. Ellis (2010) voices similar concerns in England where the political push, for over twenty years, has been to prioritize school-based initial teacher education. Ellis comments that because of this one would expect the English system to be "premised upon a participatory view of learning in the workplace" (Ellis, 2010, p. 106). What he finds, however, is that teaching knowledge is interpreted as a 'thing' that is received. What is rewarded, Ellis observes, is the reproduction of routinized behaviours.

The tenor of these observations continues with van Velzen and Volman's (2009) research in the Netherlands. They found that when they examined mentor teachers' modelling of practice in a context guided by the concept 'cognitive apprenticeship' the mentoring was nevertheless still "strongly oriented on practical tips and advice … instead of revealing the underlying ideas and insights" (p. 358). In later research van Velzen et al (2012) comment "educational activities at work … ask for pedagogy that promotes work-based learning. Such a pedagogy is still embryonic in its development" (p. 229).

Given that the development of a work-based learning pedagogy is embryonic it is critical that research provides further insights into how mentor teachers understand the provision of classroom teaching experience. It is a goal of this study to examine the ways in which a particular group of mentor teachers understood their mentoring role as educative in the sense outlined above.

2.3.6 Learning to Teach Curriculum

Providing an educative experience implies an intentional and planned approach to the pre-service teachers' experience in schools. Some teacher educators aim to intervene to enhance educative mentoring by designing what they are calling: a

clinical, practicum or workplace curriculum (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012; Davies et al., 2013; Feiman-Nemser, 2001a, 2012; Hagger & McIntyre, 2006; Kriewaldt & Turnidge, 2013; Norman, 2011); a framework for maximizing the potential of mentoring and build consistency across the sector (Ambrosetti, Knight, & Dekkers, 2014) or "core practices of teaching" (McDonald, Kazemi, & Kavanagh, 2013).

What is being recognised by these curriculum proponents is that the school and classroom act as "a living curriculum for the apprentice" (van Velzen & Volman, 2009, p. 347). The motivation behind much of this research is the belief that educative experiences must not be left to chance but must be designed to be intentionally pedagogical (Billett, 2006; Hudson, 2013; van Velzen & Volman, 2009). However, what much of this literature appears to underestimate is the emotional component of the mentoring relationship.

For instance, Darling-Hammond (2012) talks about a 'clinical curriculum' and this term with its medical analogy and discourse has been used in Australia and the United States (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2010; Davies et al., 2013) to argue for a way to ensure a better use of the school based time in initial teacher education. However, the term 'clinical' emphasises the scientific treatment of disease and usually connotes professional knowledge that is not affected by emotion. Furthermore, medical education is being critiqued for failing to develop empathy in medical students (Haque & Waytz, 2012; Neumann et al., 2011). This suggests using this medical term for the school-based component of initial teacher education may be misplaced. As was noted at the beginning of this chapter the choice of language influences perceptions and meaning making. For some, 'clinical' may communicate a narrow, technical and instrumental understanding of mentoring.

A criticism about the work on core practices of teaching (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Grossman, 2011) is that it shifts the focus on to visible behaviours rather than underlying purposes (Kennedy, 2016) and is prescriptive and technical (Souto-Manning, 2019; Zeichner, 2012). As Kennedy (2016) explains "Novices need to be helped to think strategically about how their actions address a larger purpose rather than focusing on how to mimic a set of actions they observe" (p. 9).

In Australia, as in many parts of the world, a pedagogical perspective is further supported by the development of teaching standards (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2011). These standards attempt to provide a map of good teaching and expectations for achievement at the graduate or entry level. As such, the standards imply what is required of a mentor teacher.

However, these standards documents tend to be very broad descriptions of the territory, necessarily stated "in a very general way" (Zeichner, 2012, p. 377) and may communicate that the key purpose is one of compliance (Talbot, 2018). Ellis (2010) comments that standards are "a means of restricting our interpretation and analysis of experience from within" (p. 111). That is, they may close off and limit the need to make meaning of experiences in context. Standards are usually insensitive to the need to be "fluid and flexible" (Talbot, 2018, p. 92) in terms of educational settings. They do not, for instance, take into account the differences between an infant and secondary classroom. Others note that performance standards contribute to a fragmentation of the teacher's role (Korthagen, 2004), their checklist design can encourage an audit culture (White et al., 2010) and they tend to ignore the "intimate nature of teaching and school learning" (Bruner, 1996, p. 86). Certainly regulatory bodies have tended to overlook the emotional complexities of mentoring relationships.

For the most part this curriculum and standards work continues to emphasise that mentoring will be improved by strategies designed by initial teacher educators or policy writers external to schools. There is a continuing thread of what Zeichner (1996) calls "a lack of respect for the craft knowledge of teachers" (p. 199). He asserts that mentor teachers must be treated as "equal participants in the practicum" and that the "practicum curriculum should be negotiated" (Zeichner, 1996, p. 224). This is particularly the case if 'curriculum' is translated into a linear stage scheme (Ellis, 2010) that ignores the serendipitous learning that is difficult to plan for. The understanding of mentor teachers, building on their situated expertise in classrooms, is critical for negotiating any practice curriculum. Their voice is a big omission in much of this curriculum literature.

2.3.7 Assessing Progress

A further aspect of a curriculum that aims to provide an educative experience is how a mentor teacher understands their role as an assessor. That is, the mentor teacher role requires them to make judgements about a pre-service teachers' progress and sometimes their fitness to be certified to teach. This implies both a sense of what the learning to teach curriculum or 'journey' entails as well as what will count as successful completion.

Until recently there has been little examination in the literature of how mentor teachers understand the practice of assessing pre-service teachers, other than expressions of concern about conflicting purposes and the tensions between providing support and a requirement to assess (Hawkey, 2006; Hobson et al., 2009; Tillema et al., 2011). However, more recently teacher educators are developing rubrics, protocols and frameworks to support this aspect of the mentoring role. For instance,

Australian researchers (Sweeney & Nielsen, 2018) examine how an assessment rubric can be used to guide formative and summative assessment conversations, while New Zealand research, collaboratively undertaken with primary school teachers (Haigh & Ell, 2014; Haigh, Ell, & Mackisack, 2013), acknowledges the complexity of the assessment task. The New Zealand scholars explain that assessment in this context is currently largely an idiosyncratic practice and one that is not transparent. What was influential for the mentor teachers' assessment decisions were their views about their pre-service teachers as learners and their opinions about what constituted readiness to teach.

Hence, it appears that how mentor teachers consider their pre-service teachers as adult learners influences their understanding of their mentoring role. This is the focus of the following section.

2.3.8 Pre-service Teacher as a Learner

Some researchers emphasise the importance of mentor teachers focusing on their pre-service teacher as a learner, rather than as an adult practising what they have learned elsewhere (Achinstein & Athanases, 2005, 2006; Edwards & Protheroe, 2003, 2004; Norman, 2011; Schwille, 2008). As Hodkinson, Biesta and James (2008) explain "whatever the setting within which learning takes place, it is necessary to understand that learning from both the perspective of the individual learner, and that of the learning situation" (p. 28). Wang and Odell (2002) maintain that it is important to "treat novices as active learners and facilitate their construction and reconstruction of the meaning of specific but crucial events and situations"(p. 524).

Scholars argue that mentor teachers must understand learning to teach from the novice's perspective and assist their observation of the details of practice and their

interpretation of them. At one level this includes taking into account and being responsive to the adult pre-service teachers' learning styles, their concerns, and stage of development (Hobson et al., 2009). In addition, as Kennedy (2016) points out, mentor teachers need to understand and analyse the problems of practice that are most likely to challenge pre-service teachers. Scholars have pointed out that mentor teachers need to understand that novices may not know what to look for or how to interpret what they are observing (Dewey, 1904/1965; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; Grossman, 2011), and are likely to "adopt the practices of their former teachers" (Kennedy, 1999, p. 55). Furthermore, like the students in the classrooms, the adult pre-service teachers differ and adjustments have to be made to mentoring approaches (Hobson et al., 2009; Talbot, 2018; van Velzen et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, researchers have revealed that many mentor teachers have a limited understanding about how people learn to teach. Some teachers hold "highly individualistic" (Britzman, 1991, p. 230) explanations by assuming a pre-service teacher is a "natural teacher or you're not" (Bullough, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 1998; Southgate et al., 2013; Valencia et al., 2009; Zeichner, 2010). Others believe they learned to teach from their own experience, or from practice, in a "sink or swim" fashion (Feiman-Nemser, 1998). These attitudes and beliefs inevitably shape their behaviour when they take on the mentor teacher role and, as scholars note, result in learning to teach being left, primarily, in the hands of the pre-service teachers themselves (Wang & Odell, 2007).

Providing an educative experience entails having the novice learner in mind. That is the relationship between mentor and pre-service teacher is critical for participation in a meaning making process. The following section explores the

relational nature of the mentor teacher role and how this has been critiqued and interpreted in the extant literature.

2.4 Relationships and Learning to Teach Teaching

Socio-cultural and constructivist interpretations of teaching and learning, such as were noted above, have influenced scholars to look more closely at relationships in mentoring. Even though it might seem an obvious fact that mentor teachers are in a relationship with someone who is learning to teach it is not always central to their thinking abut the role. It certainly is generally not given much attention in policy documents or curricular that aim to prepare mentor teachers. There is varying emphasis on this in the literature. One of the goals of this thesis is to explore in what ways mentor teachers might view their relationship with their pre-service teacher and how this impacts on their understanding of what it means to teach pre-service teachers to teach.

The following sections highlight the focus on mentoring relationships in the extant literature. The literature explores the notion of identity and the role of a nurturing stance for building trust in the relationship. More recent literature emphasises the importance of mentor teachers assuming a mutual learning stance with their pre-service teacher. These relational considerations invite an enhanced understanding of the mentoring role. Hence, this section provides the second definition of mentoring in this chapter.

2.4.1 Focusing on Relationships

The importance of the relational component of mentoring is acknowledged in the broader literature on mentoring. This includes research into mentoring practices in

businesses, corporations and government agencies other than education (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010; Edwards, 2010; Edwards, Gilroy, & Hartley, 2002; Fletcher & Ragins, 2007; Graves, 2010; Kram, 1988). In initial teacher education, scholars internationally are recognising that the relationship between the mentor and pre-service teacher is critical (Edwards-Groves, Kemmis, Hardy, & Ponte, 2010; Graves, 2010; Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011; Hoffman et al., 2015; Le Cornu, 2010, 2012; Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010) because learning to teach is relational (Ferrier-Kerr, 2009; Hodkinson et al., 2008). For instance, Hawkey (1997) argues that "the relationship established between mentors and student teachers is the avenue through which all mentoring processes, complete with the interplay of cognitive, affective, and interpersonal factors, are mediated" (p. 332) and, in a subsequent article, proposes a greater emphasis on the "agency of the mentoring relationship" (1998, p. 667).

Nevertheless, not all scholars emphasise the relational aspects of mentoring. For instance, Hagger and McIntyre (2006) in *Learning Teaching from Teachers* emphasise the expertise of teachers and barely address that learning to teach is either supported or challenged by the relationship between mentor teacher and novice. The mentor teacher's knowledge appears to be an individual attribute, communicated in cognitive terms, that the pre-service teacher 'taps into'. This implies a technical, 'delivery' approach to learning to teach and appears to ignore "*what* is being learned as well as the social situation of that learning" (Ellis, 2010, p. 116 emphasis in the original). The emphasis in what follows is on scholars who emphasise the critical place of relationships in understanding the role of mentor teachers.

2.4.2 Identity of the Mentor Teacher

Both mentor and pre-service teacher bring a sense of self to their relationship. Part of this sense is their role identity. As we saw earlier in this chapter, the role names for the teacher have been criticised as leading to ambiguity and uncertainty, thus contributing to a teacher's capacity to assume an educative role. This suggests that the part identity plays in the relationship is important for understanding how to make mentoring more educative.

Much of the scholarship around the sense of self, identity or "core qualities" (Korthagen, 2004) that teachers bring to their mentoring relationship borrows conceptually from Gee (2000-2001): "Being recognized as a certain 'kind of person' in a given context, is what I mean here by 'identity'" (Gee, 2000-2001, p. 99). The aspiration for the teacher taking on the mentor teacher role is that they see themselves as the providers of an educative experience for their pre-service teachers.

However, on the whole, it is reported that the 'kind of person' a mentor teacher is recognised as, is problematic. Two identities in particular appear to draw attention away from assuming an educative role: first their identity as a teacher of students and second the priority given to providing emotional support.

A mentor teacher's identity is particularly challenged by the dual roles of being a teacher of students and working with a novice teacher. Research reveals that many teachers struggle with this dual role (Jaspers et al., 2014; Sim, 2011; Tillema & Smith, 2009; E. White, 2014) and report feeling that their work with a pre-service teacher takes them "away from their pupils" (Jaspers et al., 2014, p. 108). As Jaspers et al (2014) note, from their interviews of seven mentor teachers, taking on a pre-service teacher was perceived as a "side task" to the real business of teaching

children. They experience tension in working out where their priorities lie (Sim, 2011) and feel uncertain about their mentoring role (Hall et al., 2008). Scholars have explained that in these circumstances there is often anxiety about intervening in the pre-service teachers' teaching practice (Jaspers et al., 2014). What can follow has been described as "benign neglect" (Bullough, 2005) and "lost opportunities for learning" (Valencia et al., 2009).

However, when teachers assume the mentoring role they are in a sense adult educators (Le Cornu, 2012) even when they "do not see their role in helping adults to learn" (Jaspers et al., 2014, p. 114). Moving from teaching pupils to teaching an adult has been described as an exercise "lost in translation" (Orland-Barak, 2005), while "the challenges and significance of their relationships with adults is often overlooked" (Peters & Pearce, 2012, p. 250). Mentor teachers are more used to relating to other adults in the school community as friends and colleagues and this adds a further challenge to considering the adult pre-service teacher as a learner (Jaspers et al., 2014, p. 114). For many mentor teachers the presence of another adult in the classroom, and in particular mature age pre-service teachers (Graves, 2010; Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011; Hastings, 2010; Sim, 2011), adds an emotional complexity that provides a persistent challenge to their sense of who they are as a teacher (Bullough, 2005; Hawkey, 2006). This has been called the dark side of mentoring (Bullough, 2005; Hobson et al., 2009).

It is worth noting that these researchers are initial teacher educators who work with adults. It is possible that they underestimate the relational challenge teachers experience when they transition from being primarily a teacher of children to becoming a teacher of an adult. More research is needed to understand these relational challenges from the perspective of mentor teachers.

The emotional side of mentoring has also been recognised by scholars as a problematic aspect of a mentor teacher's identity, particularly when they see themselves primarily as a nurturer. The definition of mentoring provided earlier in this chapter talked about the mentor providing "one-on-one support" (Hobson et al., 2009). 'Support' is a vague term but researchers note that mentor teachers usually orient themselves to a role that is significantly about providing emotional support for the pre-service teacher (Bullough, 2005; Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011; Hastings, 2010; Hennissen et al., 2011). This has been called the humanistic side of mentoring (Beyene, Anglin, Sanchez, & Ballou, 2002; Wang & Odell, 2002, 2007). Some researchers are concerned that the nurturing role dominates. The criticism made is that mentor teachers establish a "community of compassion" rather than a "community of inquiry" (Bullough, 2005, p. 153).

Those who critique the predominance of emotional support and compassion appear to assume polarities, that the affective is separate from the cognitive. They are understandably frustrated when they see politeness and the avoidance of feedback lead to "lost opportunities for learning" (Valencia et al., 2009). Nevertheless, other scholars recognise that a caring relationship, rather than being an end in itself, is the foundations for building the emotional or relational component for learning and inquiry (Goldstein, 1999; Hattie, 2012; Hawkey, 2006; Noddings, 1986; Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006).

2.4.3 Building Trust

Interpreting the relationship between mentor and pre-service teacher as critical and core to meaning making entails consideration of the affective dimension of relationships. Nurturing or caring for the other and building trust are the foundation

for the communication that makes meaning of classroom experiences. Caring becomes a responsibility (Goldstein, 1999; Noddings, 1986).

As we have seen, understanding learning to teach from the novice's perspective is an important part of the mentor teacher role. A caring relationship that acknowledges the importance of empathy and is "willing to be vulnerable to another" (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 17) builds trust. Trust is the critical foundation for understanding the other, in this case "what an intern knows and understands in order to help them make informed teaching decisions" (Yendol-Hoppey, 2007, p. 677). For mentor teachers sharing their own weaknesses and uncertainties about teaching are key for building trust (Hudson, 2016a). They make themselves vulnerable "in the service of learning" (Palmer, 1998, p. 10).

This is not an easy aspect of an educative mentor teacher's role. Trust takes time to develop (Awaya et al., 2003; Clarke, 2006; Hudson, 2016a; Le Cornu, 2005) and involves mentor teachers "learning how to build trust in a way that touches the core emotional and professional identity of the mentees in their work with pupils [and it] cannot be assumed that all mentor teachers will find this easy" (Orland-Barak, 2005, p. 362). What is being highlighted here is the complex relational nature (Bradbury & Koballa, 2008) of the mentor teacher role.

In seeking to establish approaches to mentoring practice that are educative, scholars maintain that the more expert educator must not only take on responsibility for "an intentional set of experiences and learning" (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012, p. 162) but also a responsibility for the relationship. As Feiman-Nemser pointed out in 1998 (1998, 2012), and Kwan and Lopez-Real asserted in 2005 (p. 276), mentoring is both a relationship and a process. Feiman-Nemser goes further when she states that mentored learning to teach, provides a framework for considering how

when “in helping novices learn to teach, mentors take an educational role, form a pedagogical relationship, and engage in an educational activity” (Feiman-Nemser, 2012, p. 241)

Rather than a simple matter of having more expertise, what we see here is a requirement that mentor teachers consciously work at a particular kind of relationship with their pre-service teacher. Furthermore, as Lucas (2001) claims, taking responsibility for the relationship is important because “learning how to develop a relationship is a process in itself” (p. 23). That is, some scholars are arguing that mentor teachers need to have a consciousness and intentionality about their relationship with their pre-service teacher, rather than simply taking it for granted.

2.4.4 Reciprocal or Mutual Learning Relationships

Taking responsibility for the relationship acknowledges that what is involved in becoming a mentor teacher is a relational process (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005). Many teacher educators, particularly in Australia, have begun to talk about mentoring as a collegial learning relationship and are using the concept ‘reciprocal learning relationship’ in their writing (Le Cornu, 2005, 2010, 2012; Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008; White et al., 2010). Learning is placed at the centre of practice (Le Cornu, 2005, 2012) and the development of respect and rapport are vital (Jones & Brown, 2011). Thus an intentional focus on the relationship is being emphasised as core to understanding the mentor teacher role.

Other scholars prefer the concept of mutuality (Beyene et al., 2002; Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991; Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006; Wenger, 1998). Mutuality of relationship involves both the cognitive and affective domains through the co-construction of meaning (Gergen, 2009). Haigh and Ward (2004)

explain that a collaborative partnerships between mentor and pre-service teacher results in mutuality that is "a common desire to learn through problematising the teaching situation" (p. 143). Here the roles of mentor and pre-service teacher become interconnected and interdependent (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017) and the importance of interpersonal relationships is emphasised (Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010). However, as Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010) observe, there is limited research on mentor and pre-service teachers as interconnected partners.

Understanding the reciprocal or mutual learning nature of the mentor teacher role requires a definition of mentoring that stands in contrast to the hierarchical definition provided earlier in this chapter (Hobson et al., 2009). Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010) provide such a definition using the concept of reciprocity. However, their definition does not explicitly include the notion of co-learning leaving it implied in the term "developmental pattern" that derives from authors such as Kram (1988; Ragins & Kram, 2007) writing about mentoring in corporations and businesses:

> Mentoring is a non-hierarchical, reciprocal relationship between mentors and mentees who work towards specific professional and personal outcomes for the mentee. The relationship usually follows a developmental pattern within a specified timeframe and roles are defined, expectations are outlined and a purpose is (ideally) clearly delineated (p. 52).

Understanding mentoring relationships informed by critical constructivist and social cultural perspectives position both mentor and pre-service teacher as learners (Wang & Odell, 2002, 2007). That is, the mentor teacher consciously assumes an identity as a learner about teaching and learning. Within this conceptualisation, the

pre-service teacher is an active participant in socially shared cognition (Schwille, 2008; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Mutuality emphasises the participatory (Jaspers et al., 2014) and interdependent (Darwin, 2000) nature of the mentoring relationship. Mentoring becomes a 'mutually beneficial relationship in which both the mentor and the protégé grow as a result of their relational connection' (Beyene et al., 2002, p. 87).

What is critical in applying the aspirational concept of reciprocity or mutuality to the relationship between a mentors and pre-service teachers is an understanding that both are shaped by their language worlds or "discourse communities" (Putnam & Borko, 2000). As Bakhtin (1981) explains, "the word in language is half someone else's. … it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's context, serving other people's intentions; it's from there that anyone must take the word and make it one's own" (pp. 293-294). Mentor and pre-service teacher together have the potential to create meaning and shared understanding (Wenger, 1998) about their joint action in classroom and school.

It is beyond the scope of this case study to pursue the ways in which pre-service teachers may have been influenced by their time as school students or the discourse of their tertiary institution. It is, however, relevant to consider here how the connection mentor teachers forge with their pre-service teacher might be facilitated by the language world that is their school community. This is the focus for the following section.

2.4.5 Community Based Mentoring

As we have already noted, mentor teachers do not automatically see themselves as teachers of teaching. They do not necessarily have an intentional responsibility for a practice-based curriculum. Scholars have pointed to the significant

role the context or school culture plays in building this orientation to mentoring (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 1999; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2010; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Timperley, 2013; Wang, 2001). It is the discourse within the school community that provides "the cognitive tools – ideas, theories, and concepts – that individuals appropriate as their own through their personal efforts to make sense of experiences" (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p. 5). The context is likely to significantly "shape and constrain" the mentor teacher's conceptions and practices of mentoring (Athanases & Achinstein, 2003).

Scholars note that the mentor teacher role is often not explicitly valued in the school or the teacher education institution (Bullough, 2005; Zeichner, 2002). This possibly reinforces the ambiguity of the role and the belief, noted earlier, that many teachers see mentoring pre-service teachers as a 'side-task'. For the most part, being a mentor teacher is not sufficiently recognised as a distinct professional role (Leshem, 2014). Being valued is extremely complex and is not only about the provision of time and facilitating structures, though these are important (Hobson et al., 2009). What is needed is for the discourse in the school community to explicitly address the dual role mentor teachers experience and what it takes to be an educative mentor (Wang, 2001).

Hence many scholars are suggesting schools should become 'communities of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991) or professional learning communities (Dufour, Dufour, Eaker, & Many, 2006). The claim is being made that learning to teach is better supported in such communities (Le Cornu, 2010; Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008). The aspirations for these learning communities are that teachers examine evidence of student learning (Athanases & Achinstein, 2003) problematise teaching and work collaboratively to enhance and improve their teaching practice with improved student learning outcomes firmly in mind. Teaching is seen as a collective responsibility

(Parker-Katz & Bay, 2008) and the school and classroom are places for learning about teaching and learning.

These aspirations challenge the "persistence of privacy" (Little, 1990b) in schools. Building these communities is hard relational work, particularly for school leaders (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006; Wood, 2007). Furthermore, placing student learning as a core focus of teacher learning requires highly sophisticated dialogic and relational skills (Nelson, Slavit, & Deuel, 2012), which should not be underestimated. However, this is the context and culture that scholars maintain can support identity formation as teachers of teaching (Orland-Barak, 2014). Nevertheless, it is important that scholars do not naively overlook what is involved simply because reciprocity and collegial learning is the latest model or orientation to mentoring (Le Cornu, 2010). Furthermore, the insights from mentor teachers on how their understanding of their role is influenced by the discourse and practice in their school communities would be a useful addition to the mentoring research.

2.4.6 Identity Formation in Community

The research on identity referred to earlier in this section placed an emphasis on the primacy of the individual self. With a developing focus on self in community scholars such as Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) stress that identity is "not something one has but something that develops during one's life" (p. 107). It is "not a fixed attribute of a person but a relational phenomenon" (p. 108). These scholars go on to argue that mentor teachers need opportunities to share and learn from each other, building their own discourse of learning around the role. In this way identity can change over time influenced by participation in various communities of practice in which individuals have the opportunity to interpret and reinterpret themselves

(Beijaard et al., 2004; Gee, 2000-2001; Leshem, 2014; Wenger, 1998). However, very little time is provided for mentor teachers to share and learn about mentoring from each other, and there is little research exploring the potential of such collegial conversations.

This reinterpretation of identity as a relational phenomenon implies that both the interpretation of 'self' and the mentor teacher role can be understood as influenced by the coherence of 'sayings', 'doings' and 'relatings' that occur in social circumstances (Edwards-Groves et al., 2010; Heikkinen et al., 2018; Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008). That is the discourse of the school community has the potential to influence how teachers see themselves when they take on the mentoring role.

Heikkinen et al (2018) argue, in their comparative study, that these social circumstances include not only the possibility of differing school cultures but also influences from the wider culture. When they compared how the mentoring role was understood, on the one hand by a group of Finnish teachers and on the other by a group of teachers in rural New South Wales (NSW), Australia, they found a very different understanding of the mentor teacher role. The former were interpreted as broadly reciprocal and educative while the latter communicated more instrumental individualistic purposes tied to the adoption of standards based accountability. This comparative study is a reminder of the care needed in generalising about the mentor teacher role across cultures and the complex interplay of factors that may be influencing the role understanding of mentor teachers.

Research into mentoring is taking a "relational turn" (Edwards, 2010, p. 13). Increasingly scholars are investigating the relational, and indeed the emotional aspects of mentoring. The emotional side of mentoring has often been cast as negative, "the impediment to considered judgement" (Hawkey, 2006, p. 138). What is being

increasingly better understood is the "interface of affect and cognition" (Hawkey, 2006, p. 140) and this interconnection is extremely pertinent for pre-service teacher education. It is in this context that the conversations between mentor and pre-service teacher, that carry so much of the affect as well as the cognitive, are now becoming a legitimate focus for analysis.

2.5 Mentoring for Reflective Practice

Reflective practice is a significant component of initial teacher education (Hagger et al., 2008; Valli, 1992; Zeichner, 1996). What reflective practice means, how it can be developed in pre-service teachers, and the role of mentor teachers in schools in this development has been, for many years, the focus of much research and debate. It is a goal of this thesis to examine how a number of mentor teachers understood the term 'reflection' and their mentoring, as facilitating reflective practice.

This section will consider a definition of reflection and provide insights into what the terms 'reflection' and 'critical reflection' mean in educational contexts. The section moves to examine reflection as a school-based practice and the core role of reflective conversations between mentors and pre-service teachers. Finally this section includes the third and final definition of mentoring provided in this chapter.

2.5.1 Clarifying and Defining 'Reflection'

Scholars investigating reflection describe the concept as vague, ambiguous and problematic (Brookfield, 1995; Calderhead, 1989; Clarà, 2014; Hatton & Smith, 1995; Jay & Johnson, 2002; Liu, 2015; Rodgers, 2002a) and even as a seductive slogan and bandwagon (Loughran, 2002; Zeichner, 1996). Much of the scholarly literature that focuses specifically on reflection seeks to clarify the concept in order to

facilitate research and teaching pre-service teachers in initial teacher education institutions. Little attention is given in this literature to the role of the mentor teacher as contributor to the development of reflective practice (Maynard & Furlong, 1994). On the other hand, the literature that focuses on mentoring frequently refers to reflection in ways that imply a shared understanding of what this concept means for the mentor teacher role. For a concept recognised as ambiguous this lack of clarity in the mentoring literature does not assist us to consider how mentor teachers might facilitate pre-service teachers to reflect in and from their practice experiences.

The first step in clarifying 'reflection' is to distinguish it from everyday thinking, the "uncontrolled coursing of ideas through our heads" (Dewey, 1933, p. 4). For Dewey reflective thinking is the deliberate, systematic effort of making inferences, observation, collection of evidence and analysis to bring coherence and meaning to experience (Clarà, 2014). Dewey also refers to taking action (Rodgers, 2002a). Dewey writes that reflective thinking must be an educational aim because it makes it possible for us "to act in a deliberate and intentional fashion … and enables us to *know what we are about when we act*" (Dewey, 1933, p. 17 italics in the original).

Being conscious and reflective about our actions means that it is possible to deliberately consider how they might be improved. This has been called reflection-on-action (Schön, 1983, 1987). This is reflection as planning for, or thinking back over experience, that is, before and after the action. This is what most of the literature on reflection appears to be describing (Munby & Russell, 1992). Hence the usefulness of Hatton and Smith's succinct definition of reflection as "deliberate thinking about action with a view to its improvement" (Hatton & Smith, 1995, p. 40) for the analysis of data that refers to reflection in mentoring practice.

Educative mentoring requires mentor teachers capable of what has been called 'critical reflection'. Most scholars consider critical reflection as thinking that challenges the status quo (Cochran-Smith & Paris, 1995). This means being able to thoughtfully consider the inner world of beliefs, attitudes and assumptions (Brookfield, 1995), or the moral and ethical dimensions of educational practice (Dinkelman, 2000; Le Cornu, 2005; Talbot, 2018).

Once again aspirations are critiqued by research. In one study Hobson et al (2009) report that mentor teachers "devoted little or insufficient attention to pedagogical issues, to the promotion of reflective practice incorporating an examination of principles behind practice or to issues of social reform and social justice" (p. 211). What they saw instead was the reproduction of conventional norms and practices.

Talk about examining beliefs and assumptions, requires careful guidance. Liu (2015) proposes a precise and elaborated definition when she writes:

> Critical reflection is a process of constantly analysing, questioning, and critiquing established assumptions of oneself, schools, and the society about teaching and learning, and the social and political implications of schooling, and implementing changes to previous actions that have been supported by those established assumptions for the purpose of supporting student learning and a better schooling and more just society for all children (2015, pp. 144-145).

This takes us much further than the previous definition of reflection. The process is one of problematising teaching and the purpose is clear: improved learning for all children.

When critical reflection is defined as involving the questioning of beliefs and assumptions about student learning, it highlights why this needs to be a core aspect of a mentor teacher's mentoring stance. There is a moral imperative to focus explicitly on student learning (Timperley, 2001) and to "bring individual student learning into focus" (Athanases & Achinstein, 2003, p. 1486). This is what Norman and Feiman-Nemser (2005), drawing on Dewey (Dewey, 1904/1965), refer to as "mind activity". They highlight the potential, rather than the challenge, of the mentor teacher's dual role where mentor teachers are able to hold a "bifocal vision, keeping one eye on the immediate needs of the novice teacher and one eye on the ultimate goal of meaningful and effective learning for all students" (Norman & Feiman-Nemser, 2005). Nevertheless, their focus on case studies of two beginning teachers and their mentors, illustrate both the potential and challenges involved, and how the school culture enables and constrains a critical reflective focus on student learning.

2.5.2 Reflection as School-based Practice

The scholarly work on reflection is primarily directed at improving practice in initial teacher education institutions and to facilitate research. This is frequently the rationale behind the development of levels, stages, or phases of reflection (Hatton & Smith, 1995; Korthagen, Kessels, Koster, Lagerwerf, & Wubbels, 2001; Liu, 2015; Rodgers, 2002a), where scholars attempt to pin down an elusive concept into linear steps. Within ITE institutions theories of reflection have been translated into structures such as action research cycles, group seminar discussions, assessment tasks such as journal writing or digital portfolios, and models for reflection on school experience (Etscheidt, Curran, & Sawyer, 2012; Evelein & Korthagen, 2015; Hatton & Smith, 1995; Jay & Johnson, 2002; Ward & McCotter, 2004).

For some time there has been a concern that the focus on reflection in initial teacher education has become more about prescriptive steps or processes, and less about the purpose for reflection (Brookfield, 1995; Clarà, 2014; Tessema, 2008; Valli, 1992). A risk is that tasks, required by teacher educators and designed to support the development of reflective practice, 'fall flat' in the school context (Hatton & Smith, 1995; Ward & McCotter, 2004).

Importantly, the experience of contributing to and furthering student learning takes place in school classrooms and it is this that requires the mediation of reflective thinking (Loughran, 2002). Nevertheless, the reader of research literature is left with the impression that producing a reflective practitioner does not happen in the practicum (Russell, 2013) nor is it the work of mentor teachers (Fendler, 2003; Maynard & Furlong, 1994). As Russell (2013) declares, " to reflect-in-action, a teacher candidate has to be in action – in a practicum classroom" (p. 86). Mentor teachers are rarely asked about what reflection means for their mentoring practice (Atkinson, 2012). When, on the rare occasion they were asked, Atkinson (2012) reported that, "the agentic reflective practitioner may be more of a fiction created in teacher knowledge scholarship and professional pedagogy than a reality experienced by practicing teachers" (p. 189).

An investigation of reflection in school experience, and the role of the mentor teachers in encouraging and facilitating reflective practice, remains under researched. Liu's (2015) definition of critical reflection, quoted above, helps us consider that a focus on student learning should be a core aspect of critical reflection (Norman & Feiman-Nemser, 2005; Parker-Katz & Bay, 2008; Timperley, 2013). Nevertheless, it has been noted that reflecting on student learning is notably absent in the literature that deals with reflection (Rodgers, 2002b; Ward & McCotter, 2004).

2.5.3 The Core Role of Conversations

The meaning-making work of mentor teachers is largely practiced through their talk with their pre-service teachers. If reflection, including reflection that surfaces and examines assumptions and beliefs, is to be fostered it will be carried, primarily, through conversations. Through this talk the affective and the personal are intertwined with the cognitive (Wenger, 1998). As the mentor teacher provides opportunities for assisted performance it is the meaningful dialogue or "instructional conversation" (Tharp, 1993, p. 273) and "the conversations and stories about problematic and especially difficult cases" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 108) that builds in the pre-service teacher the capacity to interpret or read the students and make meaning of situations and the repercussions of decisions. This is what Edwards (1995) calls "the zigzag of action and discussion" (p. 603).

This focus on mentoring conversations is emergent research. Since the 1990's a small number of scholars have been investigating the talk between mentor and pre-service teacher with the number growing substantially since 2000 (Crasborn, Hennissen, Brouwer, Korthagen, & Bergen, 2010, 2011; Edwards & Protheroe, 2004; Edwards-Groves, 2014; Harris & Keogh, 2013; Helman, 2006; Hoffman et al., 2015; Kriewaldt, Nash, Windsor, Thornton, & Reid, 2018; Orland-Barak & Klein, 2005; Stanulis & Russell, 2000; Strong & Baron, 2004; Timperley, 2001; van Velzen et al., 2012; Wang, Strong, & Odell, 2004). This is because it is increasingly recognised that "genuine conversations are the enabler of good mentoring" (Sheridan & Young, 2016, p. 2); "mentoring is about learning in conversations" (Tillema, van der Westhuizen, & Smith, 2015, p. vii); and, "mentoring is a relational practice that relies heavily on conversations for learning between mentor and mentee" (Talbot, 2018).

What is being emphasised is *not* the giving of advice or the transfer or delivery of knowledge about teaching. Rather mentoring conversations are seen to involve the negotiation of meaning and interpretation between mentor teacher and pre-service teacher around what is observed, experienced and the thinking that accompanies action.

2.5.4 Challenges for Conversations

Nevertheless, having conversations that focus on teaching practice and the thinking behind decisions is not a simple matter. One area of difficulty scholars note is talking with pre-service teachers about subject pedagogy (Achinstein & Davis, 2014; Ellis, 2010; Valencia et al., 2009). For instance, Valencia and colleagues use their understanding of pedagogical content knowledge to critique mentor teachers for providing sparse feedback and note that their conversations "lacked a substantive focus on teaching language arts" (p. 314). They demonstrate what can go wrong in the interactions between mentors, pre-service teachers and university supervisors where each retreats from the challenges of critique. Ellis's (2010) concern is about the inability of mentor teachers to "theorize pedagogically". However, he demonstrates, through a participant interventionist approach to research, the possibilities of facilitating mentor teachers to consider, critically, together with their pre-service teachers, how they are teaching writing, and how their teaching might be improved.

How mentor teachers learn to talk pedagogically about their subjects with pre-service teachers has received little research (Orland-Barak, 2014; Wang et al., 2004). Achinstein and Davis (2014) acknowledge this and ask, "what do mentors identify as knowledge and practices needed for subject-specific mentoring? How is subject-specific mentoring enacted and what complexities arise?" (p. 105). Their questions

alert us to the need for research that works with teachers on their mentoring practice in order to understand how pedagogical theorising might be a core part of teaching a pre-service teacher to teach.

Another challenge for conversations noted in the research is the tendency for mentor teachers to avoid conflict with their pre-service teachers. Conversations with pre-service teachers are emotionally demanding (Bullough & Draper, 2004). When conversations are avoided providing feedback becomes challenging (Hudson, 2016b; Tillema et al., 2011). Researchers describe these conversations as 'delicate' (Harris & Keogh, 2013) and note an ethic of politeness frequently prevents the difficult conversations that build learning (Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011).

2.5.5 Conversations Conceived as Dialogue

The mentor teacher's role is to assist the pre-service teacher to talk both about and within the practice of teaching. From this viewpoint mentoring has been reconceptualised as 'dialogue' or a conversation between equals (Heikkinen, Jokinen, & Tynjala, 2008). Talbot (2018) further clarifies what is meant here when she argues that, "transforming practice requires more than good-quality conversation and other pedagogical skills for mentoring. It requires a form of sharing that results in new meaning being made between those engaged in the dialogue and activities of mentoring and is thus dialogic" (p. 98)

Nevertheless, research has also noted that typically it is mentor teachers who do most of the talking (Hoffman et al., 2015). This observation reminds us of the power hierarchies communicated by the definition of mentoring quoted at the beginning of this chapter (Hobson et al., 2009). Mentor teachers retain "a great deal of power in determining how the relationship is implemented" (Bradbury & Koballa,

2008, p. 2143) and this is particularly manifest through their conversations. While mentor teachers may not be aware or understand the dynamics of power in the relationship with their pre-service teacher (Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010), nevertheless, by monopolising the talking they are likely to persist in making the focus of conversations about performance and curriculum delivery in ways that divert attention "from a primary concern with the promotion of pupil learning" (Edwards & Protheroe, 2003, p. 230).

What is critical is that mentor teachers understand the importance of facilitating their pre-service teacher to be the one talking: "For newcomers then the purpose is not to learn *from* talk as a substitute for legitimate peripheral participation; it is to learn *to* talk as a key to legitimate peripheral participation" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 109 emphasis in the original). The talk of the pre-service teacher is key because "they become conscious of what they know and believe as they hear themselves speak … being heard and hearing others, therefore must be central to the curriculum in teacher education" (Richert, 1992, pp. 193-194). Hence, mentor teachers should understand their role as providing opportunities for pre-service teachers to participate in experiences where they are learning to talk about practice (Parker-Katz & Bay, 2008). This PiTE study aims to examine mentor teachers' understanding of the role of their conversations with pre-service teachers in learning to teach as part of exploring how they understand their mentoring role.

2.5.6 Redefining Reflection and Mentoring

Scholars' investigations of conversations as central to mentoring practice are recasting the interpretation of reflective practice. This research emphasises that in schools and classrooms reflective practice is predominantly about co-constructing the

meaning of experience (Loughran, 2002) through inquiring, questioning talk, or the mediation of professional learning (Ellis, 2010; Orland-Barak, 2014). Reflection is understood as an inquiring stance that teachers hold (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001) and a social process (Tessema, 2008).

Some researchers place reflective practice at the heart of a reciprocal learning relationship between mentors and novices (Le Cornu, 2005, 2010, 2012; Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008; White et al., 2010). What is being emphasised is a move from the ambiguous and individual notion of reflection to the social construction of meaning through mediating mentoring conversations (Ambrosetti et al., 2014; Orland-Barak, 2014; Strong & Baron, 2004; van Velzen et al., 2012). Orland-Barak (2014) highlights the complexity involved in mediating learning to teach and observes that "what mentees learn and what pupils learn from mentoring … is one of the biggest challenges to the study of mediation in mentoring in the future" (Orland-Barak, 2014). The challenge of mentoring making a difference for student learning remains highlighted.

These insights invite a final re-casting of the definition of mentoring. Edwards-Groves (2014), drawing strongly on her conceptual work with Kemmis (Kemmis et al., 2014) [and this also connects with the work of Heikkinen (2012) referred to above], provides an in-depth analysis of a single case study of mentoring conversations. From this analysis she provides the following definition of mentoring:

> Mentoring is a dialogic pedagogical practice. It is a communicative and transformative practice whereby two or more people engage in learning conversations facilitated by an experienced other. These conversations are focused on learning and critical in nature, based on evidence from experiences and actions, accountable for making connections between

> theory and practice and involve timely responsive feedback and collaborative goal setting. The inter-subjective dimensions of mentoring practice – their sayings, doings and relatings – are coherent and comprehensible to each interactive participant (p. 163).

Mentoring is primarily a social, relational practice of cooperation, intentionally and pedagogically designed to facilitate learning to teach.

This definition points to the sophistication, communicative skill, intellectual and emotional intelligence required by teachers who take on the mentor teacher role. Increasingly initial teacher education, and mentoring pre-service teachers specifically, is being described as a complex process (Achinstein & Davis, 2014; Cochran-Smith, Ell, Ludlow, Grudnoff, & Aitken, 2014; Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011; Hudson, 2016a; Jones & Brown, 2011; Orland-Barak, 2010; Stanulis & Brondyk, 2013). Working at understanding the complexity of the mentor teacher role also means listening more closely to their perceptions and understandings.

2.6 Listening to Mentor Teachers' Voices

A number of teacher educators, particularly those from the United States, have long argued that the views of school based teacher educators need to shape the reform of teacher education and be given greater prominence in the research literature (Clift, 2017; Cochran-Smith & Paris, 1995; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2010; Yendol-Hoppey, Jacobs, & Dana, 2009; Zeichner, 2010). Some time ago Feiman-Nemser (1998) wrote "teachers should play a more central role in teacher education" (p. 66). However, the teachers' views about the mentoring role and reflective practice remain notably absent from the literature (Clift, 2017).

Scholars note there continues to be limited research into how mentor teachers "shape a learning environment" for pre-service teachers (van Velzen & Volman, 2009, p. 346) or that examines mentors and mentees as interconnected partners in a mentoring relationship (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010). Yendol-Hoppey (2007) observes there is little in the research literature that reveals, "how mentor teachers, conceptualised as school-based educators, shape and conduct their work with student teachers" (p. 670). Paradoxically, while it is the mentor teachers in schools who can play a significant role, it is their voices that are, for the most part, under-represented.

In this literature review there were a number of instances where our understanding of mentoring would be enhanced by knowing more from the mentor teachers' perspective. For instance, there is little joint research with mentor teachers exploring how they conceptualise learning to teach that focuses explicitly on student learning. In the Tasmanian context, for example, there has been *no research* on the mentor teacher role. We do not know the extent to which Tasmanian mentor teaches share the assumptions and beliefs that were enumerated at the beginning of this review. Nor do we know in what ways they would describe good teaching, how this guides their mentoring practice and what they see as the problems of practice from the pre-service teachers' point of view.

The voice of mentor teachers and their idiosyncratic and personal knowledge about teaching, and teaching pre-service teachers to teach, needs to be given more authority to ensure that pre-service teachers' learning goes well beyond "simply trying things out in a classroom" (Hall et al., 2008, p. 342). To develop an understanding of what is acknowledged as a complex role, mentor teachers need to be "confirmed as knowers" (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986, p. 193) and be supported in coming to "realise the value of their own experiences" (Brookfield,

1995, p. 161). Listening to the voices of mentor teachers is important for understanding mentoring pre-service teachers and crucial for understanding what is at core a "relational experience" (Beyene et al., 2002).

2.6.1 Incorporating the Views of Mentor Teachers

Nevertheless, data from mentor teachers are incorporated into the research literature in a number of ways. Firstly there are investigations where mentor teachers are the subjects of the research and their opinions are used to support the arguments being made by scholars (Crasborn et al., 2011; Hudson, 2016b; Tillema et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2004). Also included here are evaluations of mentor training programs (Hennissen et al., 2011; Timperley, 2001).

Secondly, there are research partnerships or collaborative inquiries where teacher educators negotiate with mentor teachers for an exploration of some aspect of mentoring work. This research usually contains a greater sense of the mentor teachers' opinions about the focus being investigated (Harris & Keogh, 2013; Klieger & Oster-Levinz, 2015; Leshem, 2014; Norman, 2011; Sheridan & Young, 2016; E. White, 2014).

Thirdly, there is research that is learning from the wisdom of practice and explicitly draws on the expertise of mentor teachers (Achinstein & Davis, 2014; Athanases & Achinstein, 2003; Parker-Katz & Bay, 2008; Schwille, 2008). In this research scholars claim to be listening to the mentor teachers (E. White et al., 2015), elucidating their role perceptions (Hall et al., 2008; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005) and giving voice to the teachers involved (Simpson, Hastings, & Hill, 2007).

Some researchers in this third group take the stance of a mutual learner with a small number of mentors and provide insights into the experience of mentoring

(Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011; Hastings, 2010; Parker-Katz & Bay, 2008); showcase exemplary practice (Feiman-Nemser, 2001b, 2012; Yendol-Hoppey, 2007); or demonstrate the potential of joint inquiry (Ellis, 2010). They acknowledge mentor teachers as knowers and learners in the learning to teach process. As Feiman-Nemser points out (1998, p. 66):

> what we need are new models of mentoring that respect the complex and contextualized nature of teaching, that honour teachers' knowledge and ways of knowing, and that engage novices, mentors and university-based teacher educators in a joint inquiry about teaching and learning to teach.

Research, where researcher and mentor teachers are joint inquirers, is likely to be crucial if we are to understand more deeply the relational agency and expertise of mentoring. This will require considerable mutual trust between mentor teachers and initial teacher education researchers.

As we have seen throughout this literature review much of the research into educative mentoring is aspirational. Initial teacher educators aspire to mentoring that is educative, that involves an active educational role for the mentor teacher and focuses on transforming teaching practice. However much of the research reveals just how challenging these educative aspirations can be.

In initial teacher education using the school-based time well is a core area of uncertainty. Insights from mentor teachers will be an important contribution to enhancing and improving the time pre-service teachers spend in schools. This study contributes to these insights by answering the broad research question: *How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?*

2.6.2 Synthesis and Summary

This literature review underlines how challenging it is for mentor teachers to understand their role as educative. The review highlights a number of challenges for enhancing and improving the mentor teacher role. First the need to critique the names and labels used for the role; second understanding what makes learning from experience educative; third the place of relationships in learning to teach, and finally the nature and place of reflective conversations in the learning to teach process. A significant thread that runs through this review is the critical place of meaning making between mentor and pre-service teacher. These challenges emphasise the interdependency of the cognitive and affective dimensions of mentoring, but also point to the significant influence of the school culture.

The three definitions of mentoring cited above frame the aspirations scholars hold for the mentor teacher role. The definitions move from the common hierarchical interpretation of mentoring (Hobson et al., 2009) through two other significant phases. First, Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010) introduce the notion of reciprocity in the relationship and the requirement (hope) that roles and expectations are made explicit. Second, Edwards-Groves (2014) emphasises the central role of conversation and the communicative nature of the mentoring role. Furthermore, Edwards-Groves adds the component of evidence used as a basis for feedback on learning that is embedded in experience and action. The developing sophistication of these definitions underlines the professional expertise required by a teacher taking on the mentor teacher role. Giving significance to the expertise of mentor teachers is critical because there is substantial acknowledgement that ultimately teaching is learned in and from

practice (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005).

In the Tasmanian context the extant literature enables us to comprehend the number of aspects to the mentoring role we do not yet understand; the many aspirations we have few answers for. Without an exploration of how Tasmanian teachers understand the mentoring role, we have little insight into how mentoring pre-service teachers in Tasmania might be enhanced and improved. We do not know the specific local challenges or the potential opportunities of mentor teacher expertise. Through listening to the voices of mentor teachers this PiTE study seeks to contribute to the gap in our local knowledge and also to the international conversation that is aiming to provide mentoring that is educative and focused on the improvement of educational outcomes for all students.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical perspective that provides the rationale for the research decisions made in the conduct of this study. It describes the key concepts that inform the theoretical perspective and details how each connects with the focus of this study. The chapter explains the decision to select a case study approach. The specifics of the case are described – the schools and participants from the five-year PiTE program. The ethical considerations for inviting participation are outlined. The chapter goes on to describe the data collection methods, the analysis procedures, themes and theory generation. The chapter concludes by examining what counts as quality in qualitative research and notes the limitation of the study.

3.2 Theoretical Perspective

A 'theoretical perspective', is "our view of the human world and the social life within that world" (Crotty, 2010, p. 7) . Crotty (2010) argues, "Justification of our choice and particular use of methodology and methods is something that reaches into assumptions about reality that we bring to our work. To ask about these assumptions is to ask about our theoretical perspective" (p. 2). Hence, it is essential to make

explicit the theoretical assumptions that underpin this study and reveal how they work through methodological choices and decisions.

The theoretical perspective that underpins this study is qualitative or, more precisely, interpretive. A researcher who takes an interpretive approach is concerned to explore how study participants understand and make meaning of their experience (Altheide & Johnson, 2011; Schwandt, 2000). Applied to this thesis, the purpose of this research is to understand how a specific group of mentor teachers understood their mentoring role. The core research interest is "human meaning in social life" (Erickson, 1986, p. 119) where the goal of theorizing is "providing understanding of direct 'lived experience'" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 19).

The choice of an interpretive perspective was driven not only by my professional experiences of working with teachers over many years but also, and most importantly, by my research question. The focus for this study was what the PiTE mentor teachers learned or understood about their experience of teaching pre-service teachers to teach in school settings in the context of a year rather than short periods of a few weeks.

This interpretive perspective consists of several significant, interconnected, nested (Staller, 2012) and defining concepts that together explain assumptions being made about this research. They are: beliefs about what constitutes reality (ontology); what it means to know (epistemology), including the use of the concept 'voice' in this thesis; what values are driving this research approach (axiology); and finally, what design thinking lies behind the choice of methods (methodology) (Scotland, 2012, p. 9).

3.2.1 Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology

Ontology is the "study of being" (Crotty, 2010, p. 10), the nature of reality. The major contrast in ontological views is between belief in a fixed or objective reality and belief in multiple realities or relativism. The participants in this research, and the researcher, each had their own filters (Allison & Pomeroy, 2000) through which they made sense of their PiTE experience. Ontologically, as the researcher I am assuming that there is no fixed reality to the PiTE experience but rather a socially constructed reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) shaped by the meanings made from various conversations, histories, practices and cultures within which the PiTE mentoring program played out over the five years. Therefore this research focuses on the participants' understandings of the mentoring experiences in which they were involved.

Epistemology is concerned with the nature of knowledge or "how we know what we know" (Crotty, 2010, p. 8). Interconnected with an ontological view that assumes reality is relative, co-constructed, relational and subjective, this thesis assumes a theory of knowledge that is constructionist. This assumption views knowledge as socially constructed "in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and are developed and transmitted in a social context" (Crotty, 2010, p. 42).

Epistemologically the research study focused on how the PiTE mentor teachers made meaning of their role in their specific school cultures and contexts. In particular the focus is on how they understood their interaction with their pre-service teacher. This epistemology required qualitative methods and in this study this meant using interviews to uncover participants' understandings about their mentoring role.

Interviewing involves assuming "an epistemological understanding of understanding" where it is "possible to understand the subjective meaning of action" (Schwandt, 2000, p. 193). Furthermore, understanding the claims of others is inevitably contextual, tentative (Allison & Pomeroy, 2000) and partial (Altheide & Johnson, 2011, p. 581), and must be continually re-negotiated through the imperfections of the shared language that we use. These epistemological assumptions position the researcher as learning with and from the participants, negotiating meanings through the interview and analysis processes.

Epistemology is axiological, that is it is to do with values (Carter & Little, 2007). Axiology addresses the values in research and how the values held by researchers influence the way research is conducted. In an interpretive study, the values held by a researcher influence every aspect of the research process including the choice of problem, choice of theoretical perspective or philosophical stance, choice of data-gathering and data analysis methods and so on (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

In this study the researcher demonstrates respect for the epistemology of teacher knowledge, "the knowledge teachers generate as a result of their experience as teachers" (Fenstermacher, 1994, p. 3). In addition, axiology includes ethical considerations, about the importance of not breaching the trust on which participants agreed to participate. This involves considerations about how "learning with" rather than "speaking for" the teacher participants (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011, p. 83) is communicated during both the interview process and analysis of the interview data.

Nevertheless it needs to be acknowledged that in the end a researcher must manage the interpretations and that "the contemporary context continues to be oriented toward power for the individual researcher" (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011, p.

85). This means being aware as the researcher of the values I hold, how these values are driving design choices and the process of analysis. This has implications for reflexivity and ethical considerations. Both of these matters are dealt with later in this chapter.

3.2.2 Voice

The epistemological assumptions being made by the researcher have an impact on how the concept 'voice' is used in this thesis. The concept has been used in ways that imply that participants can and will provide a stable and authentic representation (Mazzei & Jackson, 2009) of their experience in the PiTE program. However, in the qualitative research literature it is clear that "voice" is a problematic concept and post-modern researchers have deconstructed the epistemological limits of voice (Jackson & Mazzei, 2009). Their writing provides warnings against proceeding too naively. For instance, St. Pierre (2009) believes "we have burdened the voices of our participants with too much evidentiary weight" (p. 221). Others have warned against romanticizing the teacher's voice (Hargreaves, 1996), and talked about voice as "slippery and unstable" (Mazzei, 2009, p. 45) and "frail and partial" (MacLure, 2009, p. 97). As MacLure (2009) argues "Something is always lost in translation" (p. 98).

While these arguments reasonably warn against an easy reading (Mazzei, 2009) we are working in a context that promotes a managerial approach to accountability and "technological expectations about education" (Biesta, 2015, p. 13). These views of the education world are in many ways marginalising teachers' interpretation and meaning making. Policies and programs, such as PiTE, can be trapped into enacting simplistic mantras such as "more time in schools" and

"classroom ready teachers" without a deep understanding about what is involved in the classrooms. The complex intellectual work of teaching pre-service teachers to teach in school contexts should be understood from the teachers' perspective. This perspective may not be in the form of a unified 'voice' (Atkinson & Rosiek, 2009) and needs to be understood in a context that is sensitive to the uncertainty and ambiguity of the representations of experience that are collected as data.

3.2.3 Methodological Considerations

This theoretical perspective and my research question led to a consideration of interpretive research approaches. This research seeks to understand and interpret what a particular group of teachers in a specific number of school settings, learned, understood, knew, valued, believed and considered they were able to do in a specific role. Hence, it was vital to "gain access to the multiple perspectives" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 6) of the PiTE mentor teacher participants. Nevertheless a number of interpretive approaches were possible.

Because this research necessarily commenced after the PiTE program ended two interpretive approaches that required the researcher to participate in some capacity in the school context were not feasible. The first was an ethnographic approach, that would seek to describe, through direct observation, the culture of the mentor teachers involved with PiTE, (Lichtman, 2013). The second was participatory action research that could have as a purpose the enhancement and improvement of mentoring practice in department of education schools. This approach was also not viable in the circumstances.

Three other interpretive approaches provided insights and possible methodological approaches that would assist with answering my research question.

Firstly, phenomenological inquiry, that "seeks to describe and understand the essence of lived experiences of individuals who have experienced a particular phenomenon" (Lichtman, 2013, p. 83). What is important is "offering an interpretive account of what it *means* for the participant to have such concerns, within their particular context" (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006, p. 113 emphasis in the original). What it means to be mentoring the PiTE pre-service teachers is precisely the focus of this case study.

Secondly, grounded theory, where the purpose is to generate theory that is grounded in, or emerges, inductively from the data (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) provides useful methodological insights for this study. Lichtman (2013) explains that theoretical sampling and saturation, the constant-comparative method, and specific ways of coding the data are the key elements of grounded theory. Constant-comparative method involves carefully comparing earlier interviews with the ones that follow and noting what you learn, or open coding. The emerging theory guides subsequent coding of data. However, the earliest descriptions of grounded theory imply an objectivist epistemology. It is the more recent work of Charmaz (2006) that emphasises the active interpretive role of a researcher in constructing a grounded theory (Staller, 2012). While it was not the purpose of this PiTE study to follow the specified structure to develop a theory of mentoring pre-service teachers, the inductive nature of the grounded theory approach to emerge themes from coding the data was relevant for the design of research that sought to discover how the PiTE mentor teachers understood their role.

The third interpretive approach to provide insights for this study was narrative research inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000) where the written or spoken words or visual representations of individuals provide the data (Lichtman, 2013). However, the

research question was asking how the PiTE teachers understood their role as mentor teachers. While stories and story-telling were relevant to interpreting the mentor teachers' understanding of their role, narrative inquiry, as a disciplined approach to research did not appear to be an appropriate choice for this study.

Hence the qualitative design approach most suited to guide the answering of my research questions was the case study and this is the focus for the following section.

3.3 Research Strategy: A Case Study

Stake (2000) asserts that a case study is "not a methodological choice but a choice about what is to be studied" (p. 435). It is a design frame that may incorporate a number of methods (Simons, 2009; Thomas, 2011). This case study draws on the tradition of case study inquiry in education where a case study is understood to be an in-depth examination of a particular case or several cases, a particular program, or project, or setting. Indeed it is "typical to study a program on which you have been working" Lichtman (2013, p. 93) often with the aim of enhancing practice. In this instance the boundary or 'casing' (Ragin & Becker, 1992, p. 217) is the PiTE program, specifically the role understanding of teachers who became mentors teachers in the PiTE schools over a period of five years

The restrictions applied to the case "facilitates the construction of detailed, in depth understanding of what is to be studied" (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001, p. 3). Therefore a case study has been chosen for its capacity to answer the 'how' and 'why' questions (Staller, 2012), to capture the depth (Flyvbjerg, 2011) and respectfully uncover the complexity of the 'lived reality' (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001; Stake, 2000) of the mentor teachers' experience. A case study also

facilitates the capture of the participants' world view and provides an interpretive framework for understanding the practice of mentoring pre-service teachers (Staller, 2012).

Helen Simons (2009) offers a definition of case study that draws these purposes together:

> Case study is an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in a 'real life' context. It is research-based, inclusive of different methods and is evidence-led. The primary purpose is to generate in-depth understanding of a specific topic (as in a thesis), programme, policy, institution or system to generate knowledge and/or inform policy development, professional practice and civil or community action (p. 11).

These purposes contribute to what is an 'interpretive case study' that "aims to illuminate the subjective meaning that people's actions have for them" (Thacher, 2006, p. 1632). Thacher (2006) argues that case studies can also contribute to normative theory. These are case studies that "aim to contribute to our understanding of important public values …what responsibilities organizational leaders should attend to …(and) they are particularly useful for analyzing so-called 'thick ethical concepts' … that have both descriptive and evaluative dimensions that cannot be disentangled" (Thacher, 2006, p. 1632). This argument invites implications for this case study where there are ethical considerations for initial teacher education, in particular the placement of pre-service teachers in schools and the role of mentor teachers.

The case study approach also has its scholarly critics. The main criticism is that case study research is too particular and the findings cannot be generalised (Lichtman, 2013; Thomas, 2016). Nevertheless, case studies provide analytical insights (Thomas, 2016). As Flyvbjerg (2011, p. 305) explains, with case study research:

> That knowledge cannot be formally generalized does not mean that it cannot enter into the collective process of knowledge accumulation in a given field or in a society. Knowledge may be transferable even where it is not formally generalizable.

Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2012) add to this view when they argue emphatically that is possible to generalise from case studies "*if* the case generates concepts or principles with obvious relevance to some other domain" (p. 24 emphasis in the original)

This is a study of the particular case of mentor teachers' understanding and experience within the PiTE program, nevertheless the aim will be to provide sufficient detail, interpretation, concept generation and analysis that connections can be made to other settings.

3.4 Context Situating the Research

As was noted in chapter 1 concerns about teacher preparation, particularly in areas of literacy and behaviour management persuaded the Tasmanian Department of Education (DoE) to establish a partnership with the University's Faculty of Education called the Partnerships in Teaching Excellence (PiTE) program (Allen et al., 2013; Oerlemans, 2017). This initiative was influenced by policy that advocated for pre-service teachers to spend more time in schools (Hartsuyker, 2007; OECD, 2005) and

aimed to build resilience and enhance the capacity of pre-service teachers to teach in schools with a high Educational Needs Index (ENI) . These political and policy emphases formed the background for the 'unique, dynamic and complex' (Hatch, 2002, p. 9) setting for this research.

The PiTE program ran for five years (2009-2013) and involved 14 high ENI Tasmanian Department of Education schools. These schools are characterised by having many families from low socio-economic areas and a large number of students with special needs, such as challenges with learning and emotional and behavioural disorders. The goal of the partnership was to adequately prepare pre-service who were interested in working in these schools.

In 2008 a number of high ENI schools in Hobart were invited to participate. A classroom teacher from each school was required to complete an expression of interest in the position of mentor teacher. A percentage of 0.2 time release was provided to support the role. The criteria for this position asked teachers to consider whether they

- have great strengths in teaching;
- want to assist student-teachers link theory and practice;
- can teach about teaching;
- have great strengths in literacy, numeracy or a specialist curriculum area; and
- have strengths in mentoring, coaching and giving feedback.

The intention was that the mentor teacher would remain a classroom teacher, model exemplary practice for a pre-service teacher, and provide support to other pre-service teachers (up to four) allocated to the school. For the 2009 trial year, five

schools each with one lead mentor teacher were selected. The schools were networked and branded first as teaching schools and subsequently Centres of Excellence in line with the national funding through the federal government initiative *Smarter Schools: Improving Teacher Quality* (TQNP). Department and University staff supported the mentor teachers in their role.

A number of factors attracted the schools to PiTE. The principals believed they could make a difference to the capability of exiting graduates such that they would become recruitment assets; having pre-service teachers in their schools for a year provided additional adult support; the 0.2 additional funding was generous; the program endorsed the school as a centre of good teaching practice; the year placement provided adequate time to build teaching confidence and expertise; and, principals had a role on the panel that selected the pre-service teachers' participation in PiTE (Freestone, 2009, 2011).

Over the five years of PiTE there were schools from Hobart, Launceston and the northwest coast of Tasmania involved in the program. There were five secondary schools (grades 7-10), eight primary schools (grades K-6) and one rural District school (grades K-10). One primary school and one secondary school were involved for the five years of the PiTE program.

In the years following 2009, the school principal allocated the funded mentor teacher position to a classroom teacher considered to be a good model for pre-service teachers. Some schools withdrew from PiTE when they believed they did not have teachers on their staff capable of modelling and articulating good practice. In addition, during the life of PiTE, some mentor teachers with the funded allocation took-up other leadership roles in their schools and hence spent less time as classroom teachers.

In 2009 and 2010 records of teachers undertaking the mentor teacher role were either non-existent or incomplete. Of the fourteen schools, two ceased their involvement after two years and the mentor teachers from these schools had moved on to other schools. For this reason it was decided not to approach teachers from these two schools with an invitation to participate in this research.

3.4.1 Ethical Considerations

Inquiries into other people's lives are "*always* an exercise in ethics" (Agee, 2009, p. 440 emphasis in the original). The ethical considerations for this case study are detailed in *The National Statement on Ethical Conduct of Human Research* (Australian Government, 2007, updated December 2013). For this research there needed to be demonstrated respect for the participants.

Firstly, demonstrating respect meant carefully considering the research question and "how the direction of the inquiry will position the researcher in relation to participants and what the implications are for participants lives" (Agee, 2009, p. 441). The research commenced the year following the conclusion of the PiTE program and the research question for this study needed to communicate that the researcher was positioned as a learner with and from the mentor teachers. Furthermore, the research question should frame a process of exploration and discovery (Agee, 2009).

Secondly, respect meant clearly communicating to prospective participants the merit, integrity and purposes for this research and sufficient information about what would be involved. Participants must understand they are under no pressure to participate, they were being invited to volunteer and they should believe the study is worthwhile. Furthermore, they should understand that they could refuse or withdraw

at any stage. Any risks of their involvement must be minimised, for instance, participants needed to know that their privacy and confidentiality would be a priority. On this basis mentor teachers were invited to consent to participation in this case study.

This research required a minimal risk ethics application. The main risks were the potential inconvenience for participants of providing time for an interview; concerns they may have had about their privacy and possible perceptions of my influence as the DoE manager of PiTE.

The Ethics proposal outlined the process for contacting participants. Principals were asked for permission to contact the teachers on their staff. When permission was received mentors teachers were contacted and provided with information that explained the rationale for the research and the benefits to themselves and the profession. They were asked to return a consent form that itemized to what they are giving informed consent (Appendix B). The information sheet (Appendix C) acknowledged the potential power imbalance in the interview relationship and made clear that the student investigator was now retired from the DoE. There was no longer a supervisory component to the relationships that had been forged during the program. The intention was to reassure potential participants they need not assume the interviews were necessarily seeking positive responses to either PiTE or the DoE's role in the program.

In terms of confidentiality it was important to point out to participants that while pseudonyms would be used where individual responses are referred to in reporting this research, full confidentiality may not be possible. Because of the small number of schools involved and the time many of the participants had been working together over the five years it might be possible to correctly attribute quotations.

Hence it was noted in the information sheet and consent form that while every effort would be made to ensure confidentiality, anonymity could not be guaranteed. For this reason participants were given the opportunity to review the interview transcripts.

Demonstrating respect was also important in the research context. To demonstrate empathy for the time participants were being asked to provide for the interview, and the possibility they might feel inconvenienced, they were invited to make the decisions about date, time and place. In some cases it was possible to conduct the interview in school time and in the school.

3.4.2 The Participants

The invitation to participate in this research was extended to all the teachers who had participated as mentor teachers (60 teachers) in the PiTE program (with the exception of the mentor teachers from the two primary schools as noted above). Thirty teachers responded positively to the invitation to participate as 'key informants' for this study (see Appendix D for the participants' details). The gender balance of these participants is representative of the Tasmanian teacher workforce as a whole, that is, the majority of participants were female (see Table 3.1). While 12 participants had relatively recent teaching experience 18 were considerably experienced as teachers and most also had previous experience as mentors for pre-service teachers. The numbers of participants from the different contexts of primary and secondary schools was reasonably balanced. Two mentor teachers (Christine and Elizabeth) had also been PiTE pre-service teachers in the first year of the program. All names used for participants in this research are pseudonyms.

As was noted above the original conception for the PiTE mentor teachers was that they would be exemplary classroom teachers. In each PiTE school one of these

mentor teachers was allocated 0.2 to allow them to connect with and further facilitate the learning of the pre-service teachers allocated to the school. Hence in the first few years of PiTE these teachers had a pre-service teacher in their own classroom and kept a supportive eye on others. As the program continued, some principals began to select a teacher who had responsibility for supporting teachers in their school with teaching and student learning issues, to take an overview of the allocated pre-service teachers. Their role with the pre-service teacher was focused on their learning to teach not coordinating or managing their time in the schools. Where it is necessary to distinguish someone from this latter group they are called lead mentor teachers. A summary of participants' data is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Summary of Participants' Data

Categories	Number of participants
Lead Mentor Teachers	12
Classroom Mentor Teachers	18
Teachers in both roles	5
Female	21
Male	9
Aged 25-35	15
Aged 36-45	6
Aged 46-56	5
Aged 57 +	4
Years of teaching: 5-10 years	12
Years of teaching: 11-20 years	7
Years of teaching: 21-30	7
Years of teaching: 31+ years	4
High School teacher	16
Primary School teacher	10
Infant School teacher	4

3.5 Data Collection Strategies

This section outlines the methods for collecting data for this case study. The purpose of data collection in this interpretive study was to discover the beliefs, attitudes and understanding of these participants towards their experience of mentoring the PiTE pre-service teachers. The data collection strategies, in particular the use of interviews, are justified in terms of the epistemological assumptions guiding this case study. The importance of researcher reflexivity is explained. This section of the chapter describes how the interviews were conducted, the analysis process, including the use of NVivo, the emergence of themes and the development of a local theory (Richards, 2015) or organising concept.

3.5.1 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were selected from a small number of possible methods available for data collection. While observations were a possible method to interrogate the research question this approach was not possible because the case study was retrospective. Questionnaires used to survey the cohort of teachers involved with PiTE also seemed inappropriate because this method does not have the potential to probe complexities and possible ambiguities. Furthermore, the number of teachers was relatively small so a direct approach to interview seemed a more practical and timely choice of method (Fontana & Frey, 2008; Roulston, 2010). As Glesne and Peshkin (1992) explain, “in the interpretive tradition the interview can be the sole basis of study” (p. 64) particularly when the purpose of the research “is to uncover and describe the participants’ perspective on events; that is, that the subjective view is what matters” (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 81).

There are a number of ways of interviewing research participants. Interviews can be face-to-face, conducted by telephone or on-line. They can be structured and formal in style or conducted in an unstructured and conversational manner (Lichtman, 2013).

The semi-structured or guided face-to-face interview allows for a more discursive exploration of experience, probing or improvisation that aims to capture the depths of varied experiences and meaning making of the focus for study. This approach to interviewing provides a way of gathering data that is an active interaction and can lead to "the creation of a collaborative effort, … a mutually created story" (Fontana & Frey, 2008, p. 116). For the semi-structured interview a general set of questions are developed to provide a guided format that is followed flexibly with all participants and it is important that the questions elicit answers that "illuminate the phenomenon of the inquiry" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 66).

In the course of the interview process respecting how participants frame and structure their responses is an "assumption fundamental to qualitative research – the participant's perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it, not as the researcher views it" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 80). The aim is to have a purposeful conversation that collected good data (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). These insights informed the approach to interviewing selected by this researcher and the specifics of how the interviews were set up and conducted is described below.

3.5.2 Reflexivity

Reflexivity involves the researcher thinking critically about every stage of the research process and collecting textual data that captures this thinking. It means

challenging assumptions and recognizing the extent to which thoughts, actions and decisions shape how the study has been conducted (Mason, 2002). That is I, as the researcher, needed to acknowledge my influence on what and whom I study (Lichtman, 2013) and demonstrate how the concerns raised earlier, such as privileging the mentor teacher voice, will be addressed.

However, reflexivity is not the same as simply being reflective and keeping a research journal. Pillow (2003) reminds us, being reflexive means producing research that "questions its own interpretations and is reflexive about its own knowledge production towards the goal of producing better, less distorted research accounts" (Pillow, 2003, p. 178). This involves acknowledging, "that the researcher is the instrument through which all meaning comes and that he or she shapes the research and is shaped by it" (Lichtman, 2013, p. 165). This should be viewed as an asset rather than a drawback or limitation.

A research journal and memos written while coding with NVivo were the means of capturing reflexivity and self-awareness. I used the research journal and memos to note thoughts and observations around, for instance, formulating research questions and the interview process. The journal continued through my reading, coding and analysing the interview data. The memos were useful for capturing insights and puzzles that emerged within the coding process. Using these texts was one contribution to thinking about my self as a filter and interpreter in the research process.

This meant being self-conscious and self-questioning about the question asked earlier: How well can we know or understand another? And, further, how truly represent another? By giving attention to my own subjectivity in my journal and by including attention to "how does who I am, who I have been, who I think I am, and

how I feel affect data collection and analysis" (Pillow, 2003, p. 176). I not only provided an understanding of the PiTE teachers' understanding of their role but also insight into how this understanding was produced.

How these reflective texts were used in the process of analysis will be addressed below in the sections on data collection and analysis.

3.5.3 Data Collection

In the context of the research approach and research question a semi-structured face-to-face interview of no more than one-hour duration was selected as the best way to generate quality data (Roulston, 2010). As the replies were gathered from the thirty teachers who had agreed to participate a schedule of interviews was drawn up and interview times and venues negotiated (see Table 3.2 for the timeframe for interviews and analysis activity). Most of the interviews were held in school time at the participant's school. The researcher was the interviewer for all thirty interviews.

At the same time as these arrangements were being made the interview questions were written, reviewed, refined, edited and finalized, always with the research question in mind (Roulston, 2010). One mentor teacher, now a school principal, was invited to participate in a trial interview, "the *sine qua non* of sensible question development" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 67) to assist with the consideration of the interview questions. The questions were substantially re-written as a result (see Appendix E for the interview instrument). Further consideration was paid to the order of the questions: which will help build rapport, which best encourage memory, which need to be separated, which should be asked towards the end of the interview and so on (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

The interview questions sought to encourage the teachers' memories about teaching the PiTE pre-service teachers and to explore how they understood the experience. The aim was to have questions that "recapture time, place, feeling and meaning of a past event … to get the words to fly" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 69) . The interviews began with a general 'grand tour' question (Lichtman, 2013 drawing on Spradley 1979) to encourage participants to talk at length about their experience of PiTE. The teachers were then asked what pre-service teachers should be learning and how they would be teaching those things. The questions also sought to explore their values and beliefs as well as their knowledge and capabilities in mentoring pre-service teachers.

The interview process proceeded flexibly and the 'journey' depended for the most part on how the participants answered the opening 'grand tour' question. The researcher kept in mind the need to restrict her contribution to the conversation, thus facilitating the participants being the ones doing most of the talking. Inevitably, interviews that had been held previously informed those held later. Following each interview, reflections on impressions, feelings and areas of emphasis were noted in the analysis journal.

The interview process benefited from the student researcher being known to the participants as the DoE coordinator of PiTE and from previous leadership roles in professional learning. The interview data provides the evidence that the mentor teachers who chose to participate were motivated to contribute to improvements in this aspect of being a professional. They demonstrated they felt safe during the interview process by some demonstrating vulnerability, self-criticism and frustrations with how some aspects of their role had transpired.

Two digital recorders captured the interviews. The digital recordings were stored on computers and sent to a transcription company to be turned into text. All interviews were transcribed and original names (including school names) turned into pseudonyms or deleted. Participants were sent a copy of their interview for review. None of them had any alterations to make. The transcripts were stored in a locked filing cabinet in a room with password entry and the digital files on a password controlled computer.

Table 3.2

Calendar Showing Interviews, Analysis and Conferences

Year	Task	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2014													
	Ethics application			March 20th									
	Permission sought from Principals												
	Invitations to teachers												
	Dates, times, venues for Interviews negotiated												
	Interview questions developed & finalised												
	Interviews conducted												
	Interviews transcribed												
	Transcripts to teachers												
	Beginning Reading of transcripts												
2015													
	Nvivo installed & used												
	Analysis of transcripts												
	EARLI conference								25-29th Aug				
	ECER conference									8-11th Sept			
	Continue Lit review												

3.6 Analysis

Data analysis is "the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 111) and is "understood as the process of separating aggregated texts into smaller segments of meaning for close

consideration, reflection and interpretation" (Ellingson, 2011, p. 595). It is an iterative process described as "messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative and fascinating" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 111). Furthermore, "the analytic process is first and foremost a thinking process. It requires stepping into the shoes of the other and trying to see the world from their perspective" (Corbin, 2009 quoted in Bazeley, 2013 p. 161).

Immersion in "the shoes of the other", in this case through the digital interview recordings and the transcripts, was the basis for a process of thematic analysis, "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Thematic analysis in turn provided the basis for theory development. The ongoing reading and critical analysis of the extant literature also informed this process. Bazeley (2013) describes the process of analysis this way: "effective analysis requires using data to build a comprehensive, contextualised, and integrated understanding or theoretical model of what has been found, with an argument drawn from across the data that establishes the conclusions drawn" (p. 193).

This section outlines the process of analysis undertaken before and following access to NVivo. The coding process is described and the strengths and weaknesses of the NVivo application are outlined. The process of identifying themes and the generation of a local theory (Richards, 2015) is described and the way analysis was facilitated by interconnections between reading extant literature, reading, re-reading and coding the interview transcripts, and writing memos, reflective journaling and conference papers is acknowledged.

3.6.1 Commencing Analysis

The process of analysis began before access to NVivo (Version 10) was provided. Listening to and reading the interview transcripts was the first step. This was done in alphabetical order (according to pseudonym). Listening and reading provided a sense of the whole and allowed some small editing of the transcripts. It also allowed for the silences after questions to be noted as this indicated moments when participants required more thinking time before they responded to the questions.

Reading the transcripts was framed by continuing to read the extant literature particularly the ideas of educative mentoring. In turn the reading of the extant literature was informed by the experience of being the PiTE manager. This role had encouraged curiosity about the extent to which the teachers would reveal a sense of purpose behind their work with pre-service teachers. Hence, analysis could have been guided by a set of categories (Miles & Huberman, 1994) drawn from a combination of my experience as PiTE manager and the review of the literature. An example could have been 'looking for demonstrations of purpose'. However, the intention was to allow the teachers to speak for themselves and then to work with the data inductively to see what ideas were suggested by their responses to the questions.

As the transcripts were read a number of processes facilitated analysis. Coloured pens were used to trace common threads in and across the interviews. Text was underlined, highlighted and annotated with key words and ideas suggested by the text. Reflective thoughts and observations were noted in a journal (Miles & Huberman, 1994). While still waiting for NVivo, Microsoft Word was used to begin coding text around the concept 'reflection'. This concept was chosen for this early coding because it emerged frequently in the interviews and was the focus for an

international conference in the following year. This coding involved copying and pasting sections of text from the interview transcripts and placing them under emerging headings in a Word document. This provided another text to read, highlight and annotate.

From the emerging insights gained through this process two international conference papers were written. One played with the emerging theme of 'reflection' (Radford, Howells, & Williamson, 2015a) the other with 'intentionality' (Radford, Howells, & Williamson, 2015b). This writing was a process of discovery, a further way of coming to know and understand the data (Richardson, 1994). One early insight in writing about reflection was my emphasis on the positive aspects of my data, while neglecting the emerging weaknesses revealed by some mentor teachers.

Reading interview transcripts, clumping text into categories, writing about emerging thinking, and reading theoretical literature all contributed to this early analytical process (St.Pierre, 2009). For instance, 'responsibility' emerged as a possible theme through writing about how the mentor teachers demonstrated intentionality for their pre-service teachers' learning to teach. Responsibility was a consideration I had not met in the literature (although terms like 'educative mentoring' and 'school-based teacher educator' imply responsibility) nor was the concept explicit in the Australian Professional Teaching Standards (AITSL) (although again the idea is implied in the descriptions of Accomplished and Lead teachers). This made me wonder how professionally useful it might be to explore the concept of responsibility. My supervisor introduced me to the philosopher Levinas (1991) and reading articles describing his interpretation of responsibility further suggested this was an idea worth exploring.

By the time NVivo was delivered I was immersed deeply in the interview data. This depth of familiarity with each of the transcripts meant it was possible to connect and contrast data between participants. This developed a "heightened awareness of the data, a focused attention to those data, and an openness to the subtle, tacit undercurrents of social life" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 114). This was a good foundation before commencing the more technical approach to data demanded by the NVivo software. For instance, the reading and re-reading of text, prior to the use of NVivo, assisted consideration of participants in the study who may "have ensured a particular presentation of themselves to the researcher" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 116). (For example, refer to Appendix F to notes in my Analysis Journal for Harry and Marcus).

However, coding prior to NVivo was a primitive exercise in comparison with using the software. Using NVivo increased the effectiveness and efficiency of the coding process and allowed an increased focus on ways of examining the meaning of what was recorded (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). However, in moving to using the software it was important to remember, "coding should always be for a purpose. It is never an end in itself" (Richards, 2015, p. 105).

3.6.2 Introducing NVivo

Because of the number of interviews (30) and amount of text to be analysed NVivo (Version 10) was used to support the coding and categorization process. NVivo provided a systematic way to continue the inductive analysis that moved from the specific interviews to general answers to the research questions. Furthermore it proved to be essential for organising this number of transcripts and provided a way to efficiently establish new texts that captured the emerging categories, thus providing a

new view of the data (Richards, 2015). In particular, it facilitated my capacity to see the nuances in the data and this acted as a caution to romanticising my participants.

The 30 interviews were imported into NVivo into a folder named 'interviews' and case nodes were created for each interviewee into which their transcripts were coded. The next step was to cut and paste interview segments, or code. The document that this develops is called the Coding Summary by Node. One set of nodes represented the key topics covered by the interview questions. The other nodes or categories emerged inductively from reading and re-reading the interview transcripts.

This inductive coding began by cutting and pasting text from the interviews that conveyed meaning as the text was read. The first to emerge were codes directly related to what the mentor teachers said they did, for instance 'modelling' and 'encourage to see other teachers'. Others that emerged early in the coding process captured dispositions such as 'flexibility', 'trust' and 'honesty' and metaphors such as 'layers' and 'scaffold'. One code captured the inclination for story-telling and was labelled 'anecdotes', another captured references to the school cultures and contexts and was named 'context'. In this way the researcher identified significant units of interview text. This was an iterative meaning making or analytical process (Richards, 2015). Many nodes were named *in vivo,* meaning the categories were named by words occurring in the data (Richards, 2015). Furthermore it was possible, and NVivo facilitated this, for one piece of significant text to be coded into more than one node (see Appendix G for the list of coded nodes with frequencies).

This iterative process was well captured in an early entry in my coding memo. I noted: "After a morning of coding I'm thinking about how, when you add nodes, you need to go back and do some re-coding because it means you see things previous

participants have said in a slightly new way" (NVivo memo 23/10/2015, see Appendix F for extracts from my journal and coding memos).

Coding rules proved essential for the coding to be applied consistently (see the coding rules in Appendix H). A specific guide was necessary when returning to an interview transcript or moving to a new one. A printed copy of the coding rules was used to guide the process. These rules enabled clarity of focus and decision-making when dragging and dropping text, sometimes into more than one node. As can be seen in Appendix H, after three general statements each coding rule became more precise for each node in terms of 'teachers talk about' or 'describe' or 'demonstrate' something. Nevertheless, even with more precise coding rules it was important to be careful how much coding was done in a day. My memo notes, "I need to be careful when coding to not try to do too much because you do fade out of concentration" (NVivo memo 4/11/2015, see Appendix F).

3.6.3 Using NVivo to Interpret the Concept 'Responsibility'

The use of NVivo can be further explained by continuing with the example of how meaning was interpreted around the concept of responsibility. As noted above, this concept emerged from inferences being made in the coding using Microsoft word and writing a conference paper on intentionality. How might the investigative potential of NVivo contribute to the iterative interpretive process?

NVivo was used in the following ways to support this analysis: a word search was conducted; a table was developed to test inferences; parent and child nodes were created; relevant scholarly literature was sourced; 'tree pruning' or hierarchical reorganisation of nodes was carried out; the concept was tested against participants' attributes; and, a table was developed as a coding check. These processes are

described below and a summary table (Table 3.4) is provided at the end of this section.

NVivo provided the capacity to test the frequency of word use and this was done for ‘responsibility’, ‘reflect’ ‘unpacking’, ‘debrief’ and the metaphor ‘journey’. The benefit of doing this was to test how common the use of a term was. It was possible to request the term be embedded in surrounding text in order to assist with interpreting how the term was being used. A text search of the 30 interviews was made for ‘responsible/responsibility’. This showed that the 24 teachers who used the term ‘responsibility’ were either talking about their responsibility for students’ learning (that is the children in their class) or a sense of responsibility for their pre-service teacher and their progress towards becoming a confident beginning teacher. A more precise node for responsibility was needed and one was established with the coding rule: ‘Teachers talk about their sense of being responsible for the pre-service teacher’. Coding the 30 interviews into this node on a yes/no basis in terms of the coding rule revealed that 15 teachers used the term responsibility (or the synonym commitment). Nine were high school, three primary and three infant teachers. Hence the use of automated coding was used to double check emerging insights and inferences arising from the more interpretive or analytical coding process (Richards, 2015).

The data suggested half of the teachers expressed a sense of responsibility for their pre-service teachers by using the word. However, it had not been the use of the word that had suggested the concept ‘responsibility’ but, rather, reading ‘between the lines’ or inferences, when reading about the teachers’ demonstration of intentionality. What might be other indicators for how these teachers expressed a sense of responsibility for their pre-service teachers’ leaning to teach?

A place in the interview where 'responsibility' might be mentioned or implied was in answer to the question that broached the topic of the values, attitudes and beliefs that a teacher who takes on the role of a mentor teacher ought to have. To test this a table was developed (See Appendix I, for an extract) to look at what had been coded against this topic. There was no mention of the term responsibility but there are places where the concept may be inferred strongly from the emphasis on providing support for the pre-service teacher.

NVivo provides for the development of parent and child nodes that generate a sense of what the overarching categories might be. This results in the creation of what is called a 'node tree' or system of major and subsidiary categories that supports the exploration of the relations of categories (Richards, 2015). Some 'parent' nodes such as 'relationships' and 'reflection' emerged early because many participants increasingly used these terms. The interim 'parent' nodes around the ideas of intentionality and responsibility emerged through iterative processes of analysis between the interview texts, reading literature and exploring emerging ideas with my supervisors.

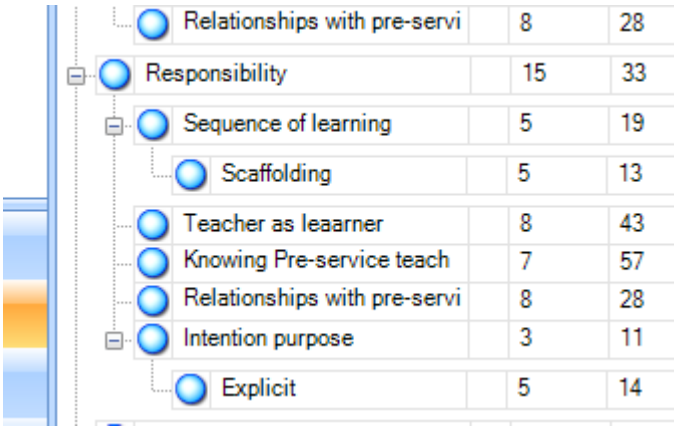
For instance, reading the scholarly literature further clarified emerging interpretations of responsibility as a parent node. An article that addressed the application of Levinas's (1985) thinking about responsibility to managers in corporations (Corvellec, 2005), emphasised that managers must attend to the specificity of their relationships. Corvellec went on to maintain, "being in relationship with another … involves endless moral responsibilities towards this other" (p. 18). This reading supported the selection of the emerging nodes that would become the 'child' nodes for responsibility and demonstrated the developing interconnection between the concepts responsibility and relationships. The 'child' nodes captured the

extent to which the mentor teachers described themselves as being there for the other – in this case their pre-service teacher. Hence, the emerging 'child' nodes were: sequence of learning; scaffolding; teacher as learner; relationship with pre-service teacher; knowing the pre-service teacher as a learner; intention purpose; and explicit. (See coding rules for these nodes in Appendix H).

The NVivo software supported the re-thinking of categories in what is called node tree pruning. To continue with the example of 'responsibility', while this term was maintained as the parent node there was a shift in the child nodes. A table was compiled to assist thinking around this family of nodes and included selected illustrative quotes (see Appendix J for the Responsibility Node Tree Table). This helped think about issues with coding similar text into different but related nodes. 'Scaffold', for instance, as well as showing coded text that explicitly mentioned the concept, also contained text that implied scaffolding but did not mention the concept. This coded text did support the emerging idea that several teachers had a clear sense of a sequence of learning for their pre-service teacher and had not left their learning to chance or to their initiative (which was another node). Hence it became clear that the nodes 'scaffold' and 'explicit' should become child nodes to 'sequence of learning' and 'intention purpose' respectively.

The node tree for responsibility is illustrated in the following screen shot.

Screen shot 3.1



In this screen shot the numbers in the first column are the number of mentor teachers with coded text in each category while the second column represents the frequency, or number of times the node is coded. The screen shot also includes the information that the child node 'Relationship with pre-service teacher' that is above 'Responsibility' in the screen shot was also in a 'Relationship' tree. This illustrates that the researcher is working through the interpretation around what is the big idea or theme and what are its constituent parts.

In addition, NVivo also facilitated the use of attributes and classifications to describe the sample and/or generate findings. These attributes can then be tested against the emerging codes. The set of attributes used here were: male and female; years teaching; school type (high, primary, primary/infant; were they a PiTE (that is a pre-service teacher in the PiTE program before becoming a mentor teacher); age; were they a classroom mentor teacher or a lead mentor teacher (or did they have both roles). These attributes were selected as the most likely to influence the teachers' role understanding. (See Table 3.1 for a summary of attributes).

Following a 'gut' feeling that the infant/primary teachers seemed to be talking in ways that implied a strong sense of their responsibility towards their pre-service

teachers a matrix coding query was run to test this notion. The attribute of school and the values of high, primary and primary/infant were tested first against the text search for responsibility (that it is the concept used in its widest sense). In terms of using the terms responsible and responsibility there was about the same level of usage between secondary (16 in total) and primary teachers (14 in total). In the second query (Refer to Table 3.3) the responsibility row was the node with the coding rule applied and this narrowed the use of the concept.

Table 3.3

Node 'Responsibility' and Grade Taught by Mentor Teacher

	A : Cases: School = High	B : Cases: School = Primary	C : Cases: School = Primary	D : Cases: School = Primary infant
1 : Responsibility	21	2	0	9

Given there are more than double the number of secondary teachers who might use the term responsibility in terms of the coding rule this matrix coding query indicates a strong use by the infant teachers.

Decisions were also made around coding for a theme and coding checks were used to investigate consistency of the analysis. Putting together a table to check and illustrate the coding decisions for the parent and child nodes for responsibility was one such check. In Appendix J the illustrative examples represent evidence of valid coding but looking for them revealed some overlap in the coding and also a lack of rigour coding into the child nodes of scaffold and explicit. Where a node such as sequence of learning allowed some interpretive margins the coding rules for scaffold and explicit were more usefully restricted to actual use of these terms. Through this check several inferences emerged which while reasonable could have found their place in sequences of learning, leaving the scaffold child node as a more precise

capture of a particular concept that adds detail to its 'parent'. This emphasised the merit of referring constantly to the coding rules.

Table 3.4 below summarises how NVivo was used to assist the interpretation of the concept 'responsibility' as it was being interpreted through the data.

Table 3.4

Using NVivo to Interpret the Concept 'Responsibility'

NVivo process	What found	Questions
Text search for word frequency	24 mentor teachers used the term	Were they referring to students or the pre-service teachers?
Text search for word using coding rule that applied the term to pre-service teachers	15 mentor teachers used the term, or the synonym 'commitment': 9 secondary; 3 primary; 3 Infant teachers	Does the explicit use of the term cover all possibilities for demonstrating a sense of responsibility?
Investigate answers to interview question on values and purposes that may imply responsibility in a table (Appendix I)	Possible to infer importance of being supportive of the pre-service teacher	What other test sources might suggest / imply responsibility?
Develop parent and child nodes and apply node tree pruning – compile table Screen shot of coding tree	Child nodes emerged that supported responsibility as the parent node but there needed to be clarification about how some child nodes were being interpreted	What is the connection between the emerging themes responsibility and relationships?
Check coding against the attributes of school type and grade taught (Table 3.3)	Strong use by infant teachers	What might infant teachers be bringing to the role of being a mentor teacher?
Table to check and illustrate coding for responsibility (Appendix J)	Coding is consistent but more rigor needed around coding for 'scaffold' and 'explicit'	How can I improve the use of these coding rules?

NVivo provided the capacity to be systematic about coding. Nevertheless, it was important to resist the potential of being 'taken over' by the technology of NVivo. In the context of my theoretical perspective, this meant resisting the sense that being completely immersed in NVivo would make my study more 'real', objective, or 'true'. Coding in this way can be seductive, potentially encouraging a researcher to

view the categories as more concrete than they were (Mason, 2002). Furthermore, it proved important at times to trace a coded extract back to the original transcript and revisit it in context (see Appendix F Analysis Journal April 17, 2017 last comment). NVivo facilitates cutting and pasting in such a way that the process can sometimes be more mechanical and in terms of interpretation it is important to be reminded of the original contextual meaning of a selected segment in order to capture the shades of meanings and nuances in the data.

3.6.4 Identifying Themes and Theory Generation

Themes are broad units of information that consist of several nodes or emerging categories "aggregated to form a common idea or broader category" (Creswell, 2013, p. 186). A theme "captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). Identifying themes is not a passive activity, rather "researcher judgement is necessary to determine what a theme is" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82).

As was shown above, in the detail of NVivo coding, determining themes is an iterative process and involves moving in "analytic circles around possible themes rather than a fixed linear approach" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 185). Themes do not 'emerge' inevitably from the data (in the sense of being uncovered). Rather, they result from meaning making across the coded categories where you "think of things in new ways" (NVivo memo 7/3/2016, Appendix F). In this study, even the common use of the terms 'reflection' and 'relationships' in the transcripts, and the possibility that these terms represented 'emerging themes', required working in analytic circles to interpret what the coded data meant. As Richards argues, "themes and ideas don't

ever just emerge. Nor do theories. … Theories (and, indeed, the hunches, ideas, themes from which they are made) are constructed by researchers" (Richards, 2015, p. 146).

Interpretation involves making sense of the data and when the data is abstracted beyond the codes and into themes it is possible to argue for a larger meaning (Bazeley, 2013). This is theory generation. Scholars maintain this is possible whether or not the strict protocols of grounded theory are followed (Bazeley, 2013; Lichtman, 2013; Richards, 2015). Richards (2015) argues that, "almost all qualitative researchers share a goal of accessible, understandable theory that is derived from, and justified by their data. … It's local to your data, but that does not mean it's no use to anyone else" (Richards, 2015, p. 147). The following section details the methods used to interpret themes and a possible local theory from this case study of PiTE mentor teachers.

3.6.5 Interpreting Themes and Theory

Using the example of 'responsibility' the process of coding and determination of categories and the iterative process has already been described. Each node name is a heading for text coded from transcripts. These coding summaries by node provide additional texts for interpretation. Reading within and across these texts to make connections is the first step to building an interpretive model (Bazeley, 2013). The above description of forming coding trees and tree pruning demonstrated how the interpretations that emerged through reading were tested using NVivo to explore how well the possible groupings of nodes worked when they were placed together. It was important to "work with the emerging ideas to analyse their relationship to each other, to categories that have not yet occurred in the data and to the data records themselves"

(Richards, 2015, p. 125). To return to the example of 'responsibility' these "analytic circles" (Creswell & Poth, 2018) were beginning to raise questions. What is the big idea here and what are the underpinning themes?

Modelling or creating diagrams was one way to represent and test emerging themes and their relationships with each other. A diagram has the capacity to illustrate how the big ideas cohere and support each other. Rather than use the NVivo facility for mapping themes this researcher drew and adapted existing diagrams. The process of pencil on paper supported the thinking and meaning process and a growing confidence in the connections between key ideas (Richards, 2015). This modelling had several iterations. Appendix K is an example where the researcher is working to understand where the emerging theme of relational responsibility fits with the other themes referred to above. The diagram visually represented the concept and showed the linkages between the central core, and the other emerging themes. This diagram is further informed by the adaptation of a diagram illustrating the assumption of relational responsibility and the experience of connectivity between self and other (see Appendix L) that was central to a conference paper (Radford, Howells, & Williamson, 2016).

Another method for analysing possible themes and the generation of theory used by this researcher was through developing matrices (Richards, 2015). The analytic work of coding, reading and re-reading, writing and modelling to illustrate thinking invited the possibility that there were four emerging themes: Relationships, Responsibility, Reciprocity and Reflection. To further assist the on-going analysis a thematic matrix was developed. This structure crosschecked each interview transcript against these four possible themes. I listened again to each interview as well as re-read the transcript and noted how there was evidence (or not) for each theme as well

as noting additional information or questions (See Appendix M for an extract from this document).

Writing about possible themes is a further way of testing the researcher's thinking and confidence in making a thematic or theory claim (Richards, 2015). Three substantial pieces of writing were important in interpreting themes and generating theory. The first involved writing a possible thesis chapter on how the mentor teachers understood 'experience'. The second was a conference paper focusing on relational responsibility (Radford et al., 2016). The third piece of writing was a published conference paper exploring the possibility of four interconnected themes: relationships, responsibility, reciprocity and reflection as providing insight into mentoring pre-service teachers in uncertain times (Radford, Howells, & Williamson, 2018). This writing provided the discipline of gathering evidence to support thematic arguments and enabled the assessment of strengths and weaknesses in the interpretation and meaning making.

Finally, deciding on themes and a possible theory was informed by extant theories (Bazeley, 2013). Reading how the concept responsibility was interpreted by Levinas (1991), other philosophers (Buber, 1970; Taylor, 1989), and the psychologist Kenneth Gergen (2009)) contributed to thinking through the coding, writing, modelling and matrices development activities. These analytical activities considered the interpretation that responsibility and reciprocity were significant aspects of being relational, rather than separate themes. The mentor teachers' demonstration and understanding of intentionality and their emphasis on encouraging reflection, or thinking about teaching with a view to improvement, then became the other big ideas. However, these themes also seemed to carry aspects of responsibility and reciprocity.

The specifics of this interpretive analysis will be detailed in the findings and discussion chapter. Here, though, it is important to note that the analytic processes described above assisted with thinking that led to the interpretation that being relational, being intentional and being reflective were the main themes that answered the research question: *How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?* In addition, the local theory generated by this inductive analysis process was the proposal that these themes are all influenced by the extent to which mentor teachers assumed relational responsibility. This local theory or organising concept is further defined and explained in the Discussion chapter.

3.7 Quality

Judging the quality of qualitative research is a field in a state of flux (Lichtman, 2013). Lichtman details the history of judging and evaluating qualitative research and highlights the debates over criteria, what they might be and whether in the qualitative domain it is possible to have a definitive set. Within this debate Lichtman proposed very broadly stated criteria:

- Researcher' role: Revealing the self and other connection.
- Convincing arguments: What was studied and what was found?
- Rich in detail: How the study was done?
- Communication: How convincing is the presentation? (Lichtman, 2013, pp. 294-297)

Richards (2015) describes an "adequate" qualitative report as follow:

- It should meet the goals of your project, answering your research question.
- It should offer analysis, not just description.

- It should offer at least a new local theory or explanation.
- It should offer something more than the participants in your research could have reported.
- And it should account for your data. This has to be an adequate account, so you will be able to claim that it 'makes sense' of what's going on in the data. (p. 213)

These two sets of criteria are relevant guides and criteria for the interpretive case study approach that has been selected as a way to answer the research question.

3.8 Limitations of the Study

There are a number of limitations with this research and they reflect a typical Ph.D. study. Firstly, the sample of schools and participants was not random. Rather, as noted above sampling was opportunistic and purposive. The participants came from the government high ENI schools that chose to be involved in the five-year PiTE program. The policy and cultural emphases were possibly different in other government schools, and in the Catholic and Independent schools that make up the Tasmanian school system. For instance the sense of accountability for student learning and the priority given to collaboration and teamwork might not have been given similar emphasis in other schools. Furthermore, the mentor teachers who accepted the invitation to participate self-selected themselves for interview. It is reasonable to assume they were confident in their mentoring role and inclined to be positive about their experience in the PiTE program.

Secondly, the PiTE program provided an atypical staffing model that depended on an external funding initiative. Therefore the teachers and schools involved may have perceived their involvement as supporting a major national and

state innovation. The funding provided the equivalent of 0.2 full time equivalent staffing and this contribution to staff time might have contributed to a *Hawthorne effect*, or a tendency for participants to want to respond positively about their mentoring experience.

Thirdly, this study only seeks the view of one side of the relationship – the mentor teachers'. The study does not seek insights from the pre-service teachers because this was outside the scope of this research.

Finally, this study was necessarily retrospective. This meant the research depended on teachers' recollections after the project had finished and there was the possibility that memories could be lost or recast. To counter this possibility the researcher was constantly triangulating the responses of the 30 participants.

3.9 Synthesis and Summary

This chapter explains the interpretive nature of this research. The purpose was to learn from the 30 participants how they understood their role as mentor teachers. As the Department of Education manager of the PiTE program this was an opportunity to inform future plans for internship programs with greater insights about what this work entails from the mentor teacher's point of view.

This chapter outlined the interpretive theoretical perspective that formed the foundation for the methodological decisions that supported a case study approach to answering the research question. The case study approach was explained and justified. Details were provided about the context of the case, including how the participants were selected and the ethical issues that required attention. Demographic information was provided to give a sense of the school sector, genders, age and career spans of the participants. The chapter detailed how the data from 30 interviews were gathered and

analysed, including the use of NVivo to facilitate handling the amount of text generated from the interviews. Both the strengths and potential concerns of using NVivo in support of the analysis process were mentioned. Finally the chapter explained the process of interpretive analysis that identified themes and "local theory" (Richards, 2015).

The following chapter is the first of the three findings chapters. Each chapter focuses on one of the key themes that provide answers to the research question: *how did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?* That is, in broad terms, these mentor teachers understood their role as being relational, being intentional, and being reflective.

The quotations in these chapters are the voices of the participants. Most are attributed by name to the participant's pseudonym. Some that represented general opinions are in quotation marks but are not specifically attributed.

Chapter 4

Findings: Being Relational

4.1 Introduction

The predominant theme that emerged from analysing the interview data was the importance of relationships. For instance, Judy claimed, “teaching is so much about relationships,” while Tess stressed, “I kept coming back to relationships because I just think that drives everything in a school.” All participants communicated the way they were embedded in networks of relationships and sometimes the exhausting nature of dealing with so many human interactions on a daily basis.

It was into this web of interactions that each mentor teacher welcomed their pre-service teacher. From the beginning of the school year the mentor teachers emphasised the importance of their pre-service teachers forming positive relationships with the students in their classrooms. The mentor teachers understood that this priority was embedded within significant collegial relationships that had the potential to enhance their own teaching and, for the pre-service teachers, learning to teach.

Most importantly for this study, the concept of relationships encompassed the connection between the mentor teacher and pre-service teacher. For most of these mentor teachers this was “the most important thing,” “huge,” “critical,” “key” and “essential.” Nevertheless, the data revealed subtle differences in the connection between mentors and pre-service teachers. While some mentor teachers communicated mutuality others suggested a subtle sense of distance or separation in their relationship with their pre-service teacher. This chapter will outline how the mentor teachers demonstrated differing understandings of being relational and the factors that appeared to influence these differences in their understanding about what it meant to be a mentor teacher.

4.2 Relationships with Students and Colleagues

All participants emphasised that the pre-service teachers must “get to know the students well,” and many stressed the importance of establishing relationships with the wider staff. This chapter will primarily report the findings about the connection between mentors and pre-service teachers however the extensive data where participants talked about relationships with students and colleagues are relevant for two main reasons. Firstly, the focus on establishing relationships with students was based on strong beliefs about the connection between relationships and learning. Collegial relationships too were viewed as contributing to learning to teach. Secondly, both relationships with students and colleagues were acknowledged as hard work, pointing to the requirement to build relational competence and agency. Both of these priorities had the potential to provide insights and inform the way the mentor teachers understood being relational with their pre-service teacher.

4.2.1 Relationships and Learning

Historically, even in these high ENI schools, working hard at forging relationships with students had not always been a priority. Chloe, who had been a teacher for 30 years, remembered that "back then it wasn't so much about relationships. … You were the teacher and you went in and taught a group of kids." Now, however, relationships were seen as foundational for learning. Kristina, for instance, remarked that, "relationships in the classroom are the most important thing upon which all learning is hinged." Laura noted that, "relationships are key when you're teaching." Claire explained, "the behaviour management lever for us is relationships." For Joe, "the learning isn't powerful if you don't have the relationship" while Susan believed "they [i.e. pre-service teachers] need to understand the power of relationships and how important that is."

Describing relationships with students as the "hinge" and "lever" underlined how critical this aspect of being relational was for these mentor teachers. Being relational meant understanding the students' backgrounds and, where relevant, the issues of poverty and trauma that played a part in some children's behaviour and learning difficulties. Alan emphasised this by saying, "we're overwhelmed by traumatic children and families." Lisa, Claire, Lucy and Rita talked about explicitly challenging, and even shocking, their pre-service teachers whose attitudes were drawn from their "usually middle-class values and views" (Lisa). As Rita explained, "I think it's really hard to have empathy if you don't know. … that you might have to go a different way to get to that student."

Collegial relationships too provided potential for learning particularly in contexts where professional expertise other than the classroom teacher's was

understood to be essential. As Martin explained: “Not just relationships with the student … but also relationships within our school system itself. Knowing who to know basically. … You name it up. You introduce.” Participants explained that these relationships were professionally important, for instance, “you might need the heads up from the social worker – it’s been bad at home the last couple of weeks so just tread carefully around that student” (John). Building collegial relationships involved consciously establishing professional networks and understanding the work of teaching was more than classroom teaching.

Collegial relationships were also recognised as a means to support a pre-service teachers learning to teach. This was achieved primarily through authentic participation in grade and subject teams. Several mentor teachers emphasised that being part of the team meant making contributions to the planning and accepting responsibility as a team member. Alan described involvement with teams and stressed the importance of authentic participation in the conversations and decisions:

> Coming along to those meetings and being part of the discussion and over the weeks getting more confident … and being part of it not just an observer. … it’s sitting at the table, not in the background. … It’s being part of it and saying: ‘as we’re working out groups and activities, maybe you could do this one’. So then they have to actively be part of it to know what they needed to do.

Team participation was a way to build meaning and mediate understanding about teaching.

4.2.2 Building Relational Competence

Building positive, respectful and trusting relationship with the students, being approachable, and demonstrating empathy meant supporting pre-service teachers in developing relational competence. Relational competence involved learning to listen and "talk to students, not talk down to them" (Lisa). Lisa implied that it was important to learn how to talk, carefully considering choice of words and tone of voice. This kind of investment in building relationships took time, effort and commitment – "It's a lot of work" (Alan). This work was also "emotionally taxing" (Miles) because you must "really give" (Marcus).

The extended time provided through the PiTE program meant pre-service teachers could be more "nuanced and sensitive around building these relationships" (Claire) in schools where it can take "months to develop that trust" (Stephanie) with students. John observed that pre-service teachers who are on short-term professional experience might think, "…well I'll grind through two more days and then I'm gone and I don't have to see that child again." However the data stressed that these mentor teachers believed that pre-service teachers should learn how to build relationships through persistent effort and conscious practice.

Building collegial relationships could also be hard work requiring persistence and the development of communicative relational skills. Being in their schools for a year meant pre-service teachers had to learn how to manage collegial relationships over time. Successful teamwork relied on all participants contributing to joint work in positive ways. Marcus reported that he encouraged his pre-service teachers to "go in with a positive attitude and enthusiasm for people."

Nevertheless, over a year relationships were tested. Claire described why learning to work at relationships over a year was important for the pre-service teachers:

> They have a desk for a whole year. So they actually get a sense of what it's like to belong to that group, and they get to be a part of the ebb and flow of the conversations and the lives of people. So seeing how you actually have to manage those relationships on a long-term basis, which is different to a prac. … They get to see the positives and negatives of being in a staffroom for a long period of time. They actually get fed up with people and discover how different personalities or work rates and attitudes can be challenging and having to manage that for real.

Here we see dramatically the emphasis placed on learning to be in relationships with others. Managing relationships "for real" communicates the conscious effort and patience needed to build respect and empathy and the difficulty of doing this on the short block practice sessions.

The data revealed that some mentor teachers understood that central to forming these collegial relationships with different staff were learning to listen, learning the appropriate registers for interaction and tact. That is, some participants talked about pointing out the place of communicative skills to their pre-service teachers. Tess, for instance, made a point of modelling the importance of the morning greeting because:

> Little things are hugely important in a school because you're working with people and so making sure that they felt welcome but they would also be welcoming to others. … I just felt early on in the piece if they

didn't get it, I was in trouble because I'd have staff saying to me so and so is not very cooperative or communicative. You just can't be like that.

Tess communicated her understanding of how the "little things" that a pre-service teacher may not notice about their communication with others must be made explicit. Her observation indicates the relational subtlety of staff interactions and the potential for actions to be misinterpreted and negatively judged. These collegial relationships were built over a year, "they weren't just doing a prac and going" (Tess). Over a year an investment in relationships was critical.

Hence the data revealed that all mentor teachers reported on the importance for pre-service teachers of "knowing their students well." They communicated a belief that relationships with the students underpinned their learning. Collegial relationships too were potential avenues for enhancing learning to teach. Both forms of relationship required hard work and attention to attitudes and communicative competence. The next section will examine the mentoring relationship and the findings will examine in what ways and to what extent the threads discussed above inform the one-on-one relationship with an adult learner.

4.3 The Mentoring Relationship

All participants spoke strongly about the central place of relationships when they talked about their pre-service teacher. Steve put this view succinctly; "Making sure you set up the right relationship to start with I think is really important."

However, within the general agreement that this relationship was "critical", "key" and "essential" there were subtle differences through the data that suggested a continuum of connection in how these mentor teachers viewed their relationship. As will be seen in the following sections, while there were broad areas of congruence in

how they viewed their mentoring relationship some communicated a sense of distance or separateness while others mutuality. This sense of an emerging continuum of connection between mentor and pre-service teachers will be explored in the following sections that begin by noting the broad areas of agreement in how they understood being relational.

4.3.1 Bringing Confidence to the Relationship

The data suggested that all the mentor teachers who agreed to participate in this case study did so on the basis of feeling confident as teachers and for the most part positive about their yearlong mentoring experience. Becoming a PiTE mentor teacher meant being confident in opening one's classroom up to another's scrutiny for a year. As Martin commented, "you need confidence in yourself and your own teaching."

Most of the mentor teachers believed that a lack of confidence is the reason some teachers resist taking pre-service teachers into their classrooms. "They don't want people questioning them" (Chloe). As Katrina explained, noting the individualistic orientation to teaching historically prevalent in schools, some teachers appear threatened by pre-service teachers:

> You have to be confident enough for people to see you make mistakes and I think there are some teachers, and they tend to be those teachers who are independent focused, they're scared of people seeing them make mistakes because they haven't seen other people make mistakes. … They're threatened by the fact that someone's going to come in and look and see what they do and then make judgements on it.

Katrina's observation captured the emotional complexity of the mentoring relationship when mentor teachers feel vulnerable and subject to judgement with another adult in their classroom. She noted that this was likely to be particularly the case for teachers who maintained their isolation and a sense of privacy.

Miles talked about the importance of being confident and open to the pre-service teachers' questioning. This also meant having the capacity to acknowledge areas for improvement in one's own teaching:

> You have to be prepared just to open your own – your whole world up to someone ripping – not ripping it apart, but that they'll ask you, why did you do that? … So you have to be prepared to lay everything, your good and your bad, out on the table.

Being confident meant being comfortable with the potential "scariness" (Claire) of having a questioning adult in their classroom.

Nevertheless, a relationship with an adult pre-service teacher was very different from the relationships with their students. Even if you were a confident experienced teacher accepting another adult into the classroom space could be challenging. Chloe, who was the most senior of the mentor teachers, explained: "I was out of my comfort zone. It's very different talking to a group of children … than it is trying to justify yourself to a group of adults. … The children don't always question you, whereas the adults will, and you have to think about what you've said." She found the experience both challenging and "hugely rewarding."

Being confident as a teacher could also be challenged if aspects of the relationship soured. Lucy provided an example of what might happen in such circumstances. She had a negative time with one of her pre-service teachers and observed, "to question why it isn't going well and what is my role in it was for me a

really hard one. …I really struggled. … I questioned myself so much. Well, shit, maybe I am doing this wrong." Her words reveal the vulnerability that resides in even a confident well-respected senior teacher when the relational dynamics become negative. Being confident in relationship can be fragile and might require explicit, sophisticated and skilled attention.

4.3.2 Having a Caring Disposition

The data revealed that all the mentor teachers forged a caring and supportive relationship with their pre-service teacher. They described having a caring disposition; they talked about being honest and building trust; they acknowledged responding to different personalities; and they stressed they too were still learning how to teach. Furthermore, not one of these participants demonstrated the absence of connection and support that a few recalled from when they themselves were pre-service teachers.

Alan, Barbara, Carmel, Charles and Katrina commented on the distant relationships they had experienced when they were pre-service teachers. Alan remembered that he "didn't really get much feedback. … it was just do what-ever you'd like to do for your time in the room. … very much left to your own devices." Barbara also described being left to learn from her own experience, while Charles and Katrina talked about being left to "sink or swim". Carmel was told, "you go and teach this" and did not feel sufficiently comfortable in the relationship with her mentor teacher to ask questions about teaching practice. For these participants it was as if there was a virtual barrier between them and their mentor teacher. Rather than repeating these patterns of mentoring behaviour each of these participants recalled

these experiences as a way of positioning themselves as very different mentor teachers in the PiTE program.

These memories illustrate one end of the suggested continuum. By contrast, all participants communicated a sense of how they forged connections with their pre-service teacher and provided them with support. For Adrienne it was important to let her pre-service teacher "know you're there to help them. You're not there to be critical of what they're doing. You're not there to put them down." Jill "would think back to how I would feel if I was going into a place where nobody knew me and how I would like to be treated."

Several participants drew parallels between building the relationship with the students in their class and the relationship with their pre-service teacher. Alan, for instance, explained that, "Building a good relationship with your pre-service teacher is so important. Knowing that, initially just building the trust with them, it's almost like a teacher with a student in the class, isn't it?" Just as they had mentioned with their relationships with their students many mentor teachers talked about building rapport with their pre-service teacher by sharing aspects of their lives and finding out about their backgrounds and interests. Most participants demonstrated that they believed it was important to know their pre-service teacher well.

The data revealed that having a caring disposition involved a number of key features that were common across all participants. They emphasised the importance of having a learning stance towards their own teaching and they shared their teaching 'mistakes'. They acknowledged that they needed to adapt to the different personalities of their pre-service teachers. They found providing honest feedback a relational balancing act and they accepted the workload demands of the mentoring role. Each of

these emphases contributed to building caring supportive connections with their pre-service teachers.

4.3.3 Having a Learning Stance

Most mentor teachers acknowledged that they were still learning about teaching. They talked about "being a learner as well" (Lucy) and having a "willingness to learn" (Adrienne). Some, such as Barbara, Chloe, Claire, Diane, Judy and Rita emphasised the importance of assuming a learning orientation to their teaching role. Rita, for instance stated, "You're never going to be *there.*" Rather than having a sense that she was confident because she had arrived at a destination Rita emphasised that learning to teach was "this constantly evolving thing … every group of children's different … there's always going to be something that you can do better." This view, that there is always something new to learn in teaching, led many mentor teachers to state that for their mentoring role you had to have "the disposition – the quality that you're also a learner" (Kristina).

This disposition to see themselves as continuing learners was in part influenced by the discourse in these PiTE schools. They reported being part of collaborative cultures that were moving to an inquiring orientation to professional learning. The teachers were being encouraged to see themselves as having an inquiring or learning stance. Steve explained how this mindset of the teacher as a learner was a change in the teaching culture and the discourse of school communities:

> I think it had always been a case of 'I'm the teacher so I know,' which is always the persona you are sort of trying to put across; it's 'you don't need to challenge me, I'm doing this because I'm a professional.' But I

think the job itself has changed a lot more now in that teachers are now encouraged to think of themselves as the learner as well as the teacher.

For some, assuming a learning stance meant sharing their teaching challenges and mistakes with their pre-service teacher. Charles noted that it helped for the pre-service teacher to "see you stressed." By positioning themselves as still being challenged and making mistakes in their teaching some mentor teachers communicated openness to learning, and intentionally made themselves vulnerable in their relationship. Adrienne expressed this view when she said "I think we have to be honest … and say oh that didn't work very well today, I shouldn't have done that with that group, I'll try something else tomorrow." Making themselves vulnerable through self-deprecating observations was a key way to build trust and support in the relationship.

In fact, most of these participants mentioned that they found being challenged about their teaching by a pre-service teacher energising. Some mentor teachers talked about the dangers of "trundling along", "slackening off", being "set in your ways" and "becoming lazy" and described their appreciation for being given a "bit of a slap" and becoming "invigorated", "revitalised", "refreshed", "mindful", and "a better teacher" who was "enjoying it more" all because of their relationship with their pre-service teacher. Miles commented, "you end up inevitably shining a spotlight on your own teaching practice." Being confident in that spotlight while demonstrating how one was continuing to learn were considered essential aspects of their relationship with their pre-service teacher.

4.3.4 Acknowledging Difference

Providing care and emotional support as a foundation for learning to teach also entailed working positively and flexibly with different personalities. Many mentor teachers commented that the pre-service teachers were "all different" and acknowledged that they needed to take into account "different personalities." Judy noted that, "some people you jell with really quickly and other people you don't … some personalities work better than others … If there's a personality clash, that's probably a bit harder". Miles had noted the fragility of some relationships, and felt there was a mystery around why some people connect and others do not, "I've seen student teachers and colleague teachers not get on very well and fail badly as a result of just a personality clash. … Who knows what chemistry all goes together to make that work?"

Some mentor teachers attributed the success of their relationships to the personality of their pre-service teacher rather than communicating a sense of their own agency or responsibility for the relationship. Jill, for instance, stated, **"**If we got the right student with the right personality then it was incredibly rich." The 'right' pre-service teacher, it appeared, demonstrated that they "wanted to learn" and responded well to feedback "not feeling like it was criticism"(Judy). Jill explained that building relationships comes with personality and is not something you can teach: "I guess that's part of the personality of what makes up a good teacher … it's really hard to teach those strategies." Jill appeared to assume the adult learner should bring relational skills as part of their 'personality'.

Building a caring relationship and remaining positive with different personalities sometimes meant controlling possible irritations. Some mentor teachers

found their relationship with their pre-service teacher was challenged when the latter "appeared to know it all already" (Chloe). As Jill explained, "there are some who come in and they sort of think they know everything. … So I guess it sort of rubs people up the wrong way to start with, and that makes it really hard." Several participants connected this irritation to how they interpreted the attitude of a mature age pre-service teacher. Patricia described her frustration with someone she described as "overconfident" when "most pre-service teachers will sit back and listen a little bit." The irritation this caused was hard to deal with and interpersonal skills were tested. "I tried to subtly say things, … I was trying to be diplomatic. I didn't really probably know how to go about doing it without insulting her." As Jackie explained, "It's actually insulting if you think you know it all by now. Because I've been doing it for 10 years and I still don't know it all and I won't ever know it all." However, there was no comment that explored why some pre-service teachers might communicate this confidence or how to understand and work with it.

Indeed, sometimes, because it was relationally confronting, it seemed easier for a mentor teacher to let these irritations remain unaddressed. When Lucy interpreted a pre-service teacher as "knowing it all already" it led her to believe she was being watched and questioned "in a judgemental way." Hence some relationships were fragile, particularly if mentor teachers found their expectations about the pre-service teacher were not met and they did not have the confidence and interpersonal skills to raise issues in a safe way.

Understanding and responding to different personalities led many of these mentor teachers to acknowledge that what worked for them was not necessarily going to work for their pre-service teacher. The dispositions these mentor teachers mentioned as extremely important for establishing and maintaining caring

relationships that supported difference were: being patient, flexible, adaptable and open minded. Elizabeth, talking about what it takes to be a mentor teacher, explained, "They've got to have a willingness to understand that their way is not the only way." Respecting difference meant realising, "you're not making them into you" (Martin). The mentor teachers talked about encouraging the pre-service teachers to think for themselves, stand on his or her own feet and find their own 'style' and strategies that fit their personalities.

4.3.5 Providing Feedback

The mentor teachers reported that being honest about their own teaching mistakes built the trust in the relationship that was the foundation for the feedback conversations that would take place over the year. Charles explained, "you know them well enough to address weaknesses and build upon strengths." Being honest, maintaining a trusting relationship and providing timely feedback were perceived as a relational balancing act. Judy acknowledged that providing feedback was "tricky and you have to be honest, but at the same time you have to be careful how you deliver it and know that it's about building relationships, knowing them."

The data revealed how these mentor teachers were grappling with this aspect of their role and how maintaining a positive relationship was foremost in their minds. Being honest was "one of the hardest things" (Chloe). Alan placed his feedback in the context of how demanding it is to teach well all of the time, even for an experienced teacher. He consciously worked at "building the relationship to say okay, that didn't go so well but this is what I'm going to do to help it. It's not a judgement thing: it's just that's teaching. Teaching is up and down … so being honest."

The mentor teachers acknowledged this as "very, very difficult" (Chloe). Chloe vividly captured the sense of relational confrontation when she commented on how hard it is to "say something nicely when somebody's not doing something particularly well. It's all very well praising someone, that's great, but it's very hard sitting down face to face and saying, look this isn't working or this could be done better."

4.3.6 Accepting the Workload

Mentor teachers, particularly those not allocated additional time to be a lead mentor, had to accept that commitment to sustaining a relationship with a pre-service teacher over a year, involved an increased workload, "it's a lot of work" (Charles). Barbara and Jackie both referred to the mentor teacher role as "an extra". Marcus explained, "It added another layer to your work," while Claire noted "it's really a different layer to teach a teacher how to teach." Adrienne described it as, "a full role in itself as well as trying to do your own teaching." Even Stephanie, who combined the roles of lead mentor and classroom mentor teacher, felt the pressure:

> You just don't have the time … you have to make time. Don't have the time to eat, to go to the toilet. If you add another person in that, … you really need to be committed to what you're doing and be able to spend that – it could be up to an hour, an hour and a half extra every single day, sometimes more.

Participants acknowledged that their conversations with their pre-service teachers were extremely important. Nevertheless, most commented on how "tricky" it was, in a busy school day to "give up time for talk". Controlling possible resentment and maintaining a caring disposition entailed keeping a generous perspective and an

orientation that valued time spent and given. Jackie explained, “You’ve got to know that you have the time to give and the patience to give. Otherwise the relationship between you and the prac student can fall down and that creates a very stressful environment for everyone.”

Many participants observed that mentoring a pre-service teacher was not a suitable task for every teacher. Being a mentor teacher required teachers “to make a commitment to put 100 per cent in and work with them” (Barbara). Katrina noted that you could not be the kind of teacher who will “begrudge giving this time.” Carmel emphasised that if you are not prepared to find the time then you were probably not suited to the mentor teacher role:

> You need to be a person who is willing to have a chat and willing to go – you need to be able to give up time. … Teachers are usually time poor, so if you’re not going to be happy about giving some extra time and putting some time into a pre-service teacher, then it’s not for you.

Just as with their relationships with students, some mentor teachers stressed that the relationship with their pre-service teacher required conscious effort over the year. For Claire this was a “long term relationship, long term commitment. It’s like getting a puppy.” This metaphor interprets the relationship as an investment in time and effort that will be rewarded in the long term provided expectations were made explicit, opportunities for learning and boundaries made clear, while all the while communicating empathy and care. Claire talked about building what she called “working trust,” and she claimed “high levels of trust” were central to this relationship.

4.3.7 Building Mutuality in Relationship

While the data revealed that all participants demonstrated care and support for their pre-service teachers some appeared to have a more interconnected and interdependent relationship. In this way they appeared to be on a different position of a suggested continuum of connection.

What marked out this interconnectedness was a sense of mutuality. Some mentor teachers' communicated that over the year they developed a sense of being in a mutual learning-to-teach partnership with their pre-service teacher. This sense of partnership was embedded in an orientation that problematised shared teaching practice: that is, challenges such as how to engage specific children, how to move the learning of specific children and how to improve on a teaching session were often communicated as shared 'problems'.

The mentor teachers who exhibited mutuality in the relationship were explicit about being in a relationship with someone who was learning to teach. While they acknowledged that "yes you're the more experienced in the role" (Joe) they described a partnership in the classroom where "we're almost learning alongside each other" (Kristina). For Charles this was in part because, as he acknowledged, he too was learning how to differentiate for his students, so "I was learning about that at the time along with the pre-service teacher. So we were learning together." Joe argued, that even as an experienced teacher, it was important to position yourself as someone who was still learning about teaching and prepared to "take advice and listen" to your pre-service teacher, "you need to ask as many questions as what the student teacher asks of you …. I think if you go in wanting to learn a few things as well … you are probably well-suited … real team teaching." For Joe, being relational as a mentor

teacher meant bringing a questioning stance and working in a reciprocal manner with his pre-service teacher.

Other mentor teachers talked about working "as an equal" (Marcus) with their pre-service teacher and, like Joe, talked about being a "team". Elizabeth, for instance, described this as, "almost seeing it sometimes as a team-teaching role and making sure that the PiTE student is involved in every part of your teaching, especially when you are struggling … struggling is a really big thing to share." Alan acknowledged, "we learnt together." Carmel communicated the sense of an authentic classroom partnership when she remembered, "I had someone to bounce ideas off … who could see it. It wasn't just someone coming in, it was someone in there."

This mutual learning of mentor teachers with their pre-service teachers was embedded in the relationship forged and socially constructed through their conversations. Alan, Barbara, Carmel, Diane and Kristina described how they used inclusive language, particularly turning the 'I' in the story of the classroom to 'we'. Barbara talked about how:

> We would sit together in our spare time and look at those bigger ideas and how *we* could pull that into our teaching and learning practice. She would have amazing ideas that she would bring to the plan as well and we would just basically co-plan.

Diane stressed the sense of how mutuality builds trust. "I think it's trust … to have confidence in the fact that we're working together here. … We haven't got an easy class and I struggle at times. But we're here for each other." Carmel remembered, "having lots of long discussions about, how can we get this student working with us." Kristina, however, described a conscious and intentional use of the pronoun 'we':

> You need to have the demeanour that you're not a know-all and that you don't want to make them feel inferior. … you're as much a learner as they are. Sometimes I'll put, now how could *we* have improved that, '*we*', using that '*we*'. … That didn't go so well. I wonder what was wrong with our planning with that, how can *we* improve that?

Working as mutual learners also invited expressions of pleasure from seeing development and growth over the year. Laura commented on the satisfaction of seeing "her blossom and really come into herself," and for Claire, seeing "real growth," was "really powerful." Tess summed up the feelings of appreciation, partnership and the potential for reciprocity:

> I think having the PiTE students in the schools just gave another resource … we weren't talking about someone who was going to be onerous, if anything they were going to be more like your equal. They were able to offer you something as well; it wasn't just going to be a one-way relationship.

Furthermore, there was explicit talk that addressed care around the language of relationships. That is, another feature of mutuality notable in the talk of some mentor teachers was the conscious and careful choice of language. Diane, for instance, referred to her consideration about how to have "carefully constructed" conversations, the need to be "sensitive to how you approach that. It's certainly not going in and saying well I've heard you've got issues with your behaviour management. … I'm here to help you make it good … it's not about that" (Diane). There was an appreciative approach to the other that talked about a sensitive choice of words, being more tentative with phrasing, and not communicating judgement but inviting questions.

Being careful not to communicate judgement in a damaging way was particularly relevant to balancing the need to provide honest feedback. Judy for instance remarked that she was "working out how you can do that [provide feedback], without making it too personal that they feel that they've failed." Only Diane really analysed the communicative effort and skills involved. She observed that, "You need to have good interpersonal skills. You need to be honest but have a way of conveying what you need to convey, without being offensive." She went on to communicate the sense that feedback conversations required tact, diplomacy, and sophisticated communication skills in order to maintain the relationship. Furthermore, Diane acknowledged the emotional component with these conversations because there was the potential for:

> confrontation and a bit of defensiveness to come in. But I think it's how you word it and the tone that you use, and the fact that you identify one thing at a time. I think people can be overwhelmed, if you've got a big list. Well these are all the things that I've observed in your lesson that haven't gone well and there's 10 of them.

In this observation Diane communicated both the interpersonal skills and pedagogical awareness that a mentor teacher requires to sustain the relationship in order to facilitate learning to teach.

4.4 Establishing Connection

With these positive, confident participants the variations in connection with their pre-service teacher are subtle threads in the data. Already I have noted how a few mentor teachers relied, to a certain extent, on the personality of their pre-service teacher for a successful experience. Only some participants used the inclusive

language that strongly conveyed the sense that they understood their role as being in a mutual learning partnership with their pre-service teacher. How might these differences and the emergence of a possible continuum of connection be understood?

This section explores what distinguishes the two positions on this continuum. Those mentor teachers who, while caring and supportive, were nevertheless 'separate' and those who emphasised mutuality and connection in their relationship with their pre-service teachers. What appeared to be contributing to a weak or strong assumption of connection were beliefs around how someone learns to teach and the ways in which the pre-service teacher was considered as an adult learner.

4.4.1 Beliefs About Learning to Teach

Some mentor teachers, for instance Katrina, Miles, Lisa, Harry and Jackie appeared to believe that teaching, or some aspects of teaching such as social skills and presence cannot be taught. Rather they are learned from experience over time. These beliefs seemed to influence the nature of the relationship forged with their pre-service teacher. Katrina, for instance, put this view most forcefully, "teaching is an art and in some ways it …can't be taught," while Miles stated: "I think it just takes time … something you really can't – well you can try and teach it, but it's very difficult. It just comes with just hours at the coalface kind of thing." An elaborated and detailed sense of the pre-service teacher as a learner and what 'it' entailed appeared difficult to explain.

Two concepts appeared central to communicating the shades of difference in how these mentor teachers understood their relationship with their pre-service teacher as a learner. These were the interconnected ideas of pre-service teachers being 'naturals' and demonstrating 'initiative'.

4.4.2 Seeing Some Pre-service Teachers as 'Naturals'

Some mentor teachers talked about their pre-service teachers as 'naturals'; "some people just got it" (Steve) or they "had it" (Harry). Most were referring to the pre-service teachers' social interactions, particularly their capacity to build relationships with students. Diane expressed a fairly common view that this "should come pretty naturally." Lisa commented, "I don't know whether you can teach it … it's just a quality." For Harry some people "are born with … the innate ability to get down on the student's level, to have that calm voice. [It] is something that you either have or you don't by the time you get into teaching." This perspective implies that this interpersonal dimension of teaching cannot be taught but must come already developed in the pre-service teacher. Katrina was strongly assertive:

> If you don't have the social interaction stuff then it's … going to be pretty difficult I think. … There are some things that you can't teach and there are some things that have to be there. … there are some things that – if she didn't have that by the time she was an adult, that's not something really that you can teach them because that's basic common sense. … there are some things you need to come with.

Other mentor teachers, though, were grappling with the realisation that social interaction did not come naturally for all their pre-service teachers. Christine commented that building relationships with students "can come naturally" but went on to note that she had seen "the flip side … that it can be something that actually has to be spelled out to somebody, that it is important." Barbara and Elizabeth acknowledged natural or innate ability but believed, "Some people may need to work harder on it, but I think they can" (Barbara). Elizabeth communicated some

uncertainty about how to develop the interpersonal skills of others when she observed, "people come with certain traits in our personality or certain values that make us really good teachers. But anything can be learnt but how do you do that?" Elizabeth's uncertainty suggested the relational interpersonal domain and how to go about teaching someone to teach, is a challenging aspect of learning to mentor.

Jackie and Katrina went beyond the matter of social interaction and observed that aspects of classroom teaching could be attributed to natural or innate ability. For Katrina "the ability to perform … it's an act … basic common sense." Jackie talked about building presence in the classroom and explained, "I've really found with prac students it's something we call the X factor because it's something you can't teach a prac student. You sort of have it or you don't."

In addition to relying on 'natural' ability several participants believed it was the pre-service teacher's responsibility to show initiative. This concept was conveyed in two ways. Firstly it was used in the sense of the pre-service teacher demonstrating the capacity to 'read' the classroom and interpreting what needed doing. The pre-service teacher was expected to know when to "jump in", be "proactive", and "don't hang back and sort of wait for permission" (Katrina). For some mentor teachers this was an attribute the pre-service teacher should come with rather than something they may need assistance learning.

The second sense given to 'initiative' was that the pre-service teacher should know what they needed to learn and ask questions. Adrienne explained this use of the term. "You rely on the student you have … you really rely on them telling you what they want out of it. … they have to be fairly proactive in that and let you know."

In these reports there is the sense that some mentor teachers believed that initiative was something a pre-service should have "naturally". Chloe talked about

how important initiative was “in a day’s teaching in the classroom”. She continued by pondering that initiative is not “something that you can actually teach someone. … so much of teaching is initiative, and just knowing how you do it.” Some pre-service teachers “had it and some didn’t” (Chloe). Once again Katrina was confident that “you can’t teach initiative.”

4.4.3 Believing Learning to Teach Does Not Come ‘Naturally’

In contrast to these views, other mentor teachers such as Stephanie emphasised that learning to teach, “doesn’t come naturally, they need a lot of transition, they don’t know everything.” Judy, Kristina and Laura all emphasised that pre-service teachers “don’t know what they don’t know.” For Laura this meant “you can’t sort of say ‘what would you like to learn?’” This view encouraged these mentor teachers to take responsibility for a relationship with a learner by acknowledging attributes common to novices learning to teach. The mentor teachers who shared this view of learning to teach put considerable effort into being “thoughtful and mindful about where people are coming from” (Susan).

Being mindful in this way involved a sophisticated capacity for empathy. Susan described being empathetic as having an “almost a nurturing kind of sense … [noticing and picking up on] some of the small things like they’re feeling anxious or if there are things that they’re feeling really uncomfortable about.” Barbara revealed how she was sensitive to the newcomer’s perspective when she commented, “I guess in the first few days or weeks it may be difficult for them to know I guess those boundaries. This is someone else’s classroom, should I be doing this or should I not?”

Being mindful involved purposefully getting to know the adult learner well. For Laura this meant, “having that initial conversation about what do you know?”

while Diane talked about getting "an understanding of the support they want and need." Stephanie explained her approach, by drawing a connection to how she would think about the students in her classroom:

> You need to get to know who that person is and what their strengths and weaknesses are … time to talk to them and observe their body language like you would a new student in your class. Some were more nervous than others. Some were more confident than others.

Understanding the pre-service teacher as a learner meant empathising with the complexity of what learning to teach entailed. Susan acknowledged she had to "start off with where they're at and what they know and draw on what they've learnt. I think sometimes transferring what they've learned from their course work into the actual classroom is really difficult." Carmel explained that pre-service teachers often found it "hard to think beyond what you are teaching at that moment." Judy understood that sometimes the pre-service teachers "don't know what to look for" and needed to be assisted to see the detail in the complexity of the classroom. Kristina also noted that pre-service teachers often miss seeing what is happening in the classroom. She explained that their, "short term memory's so taken up with the moment of, what am I going to do next and how can I teach this, they may miss it." These empathetic insights into the pre-service teacher's perspective enabled these mentor teachers to understand their role relationally and pedagogically, to consider the what, how and why of being a teacher of teaching.

Hence, the mentor teachers, who appeared to understand their pre-service teacher as a learner, talked about taking care that they were not overwhelming them. They took a developmental perspective on progress. Some mentioned "taking a reading" and judging "readiness" to take on new challenges. They were "mindful"

about how they "scaffolded" the learning. Maintaining a positive relationship was foundational to this process. At the beginning of the year these participants noted that it was important to think about how to ease the pre-service teacher into the classroom. This meant "understanding that they're not expected to know it all in that beginning year" (Diane). Elizabeth, who had been a PiTE pre-service teacher herself:

> Had a better understanding of the pressures of what it was like trying to do fulltime coursework and coming into a school. …. I was probably able to start building things more slowly for them, not kind of chucking them in the deep end.

As the year progressed these participants determined the pre-service teacher's understanding, "feeling for strengths and weaknesses" (Martin), and, looking "for the gaps they have and start to fill those in … some come in and they have no knowledge of even how a child learns to read" (Kristina). They realised that the long history of time spent as students in classrooms was also problematic. "Their default mode is to teach how they were taught," (Susan) and this was "not always the best way" (Alan).

Judging progress over time sometimes meant reassessing and adjusting their expectations in order to maintain their relationship. Laura had this experience and explained that, "Finding that in previous practice she did not have the experience that I was expecting … having to take a few steps backwards and starting at a lower level than we were expecting to," thus keeping the relationship positive. These mentor teachers, who focused on their pre-service teacher as an adult learner, carefully judged progress by looking for examples of growing confidence. Alan explained how he considered the other's perspective in order to sequence their participation in the classroom: "If they are finding it difficult to take a small group, I don't want to have

them under pressure to take the whole class." Here we see how attending to the detail of the relationship underpinned progressing learning to teach.

The mentor teachers who communicated an understanding that pre-service teachers would not necessarily know what they needed to learn, accepted that attributes, such as social skills and initiative, should be fostered, and even taught. Hence they communicated a capacity to purposefully facilitate the development of social skills and initiative in the classroom. Charles, for instance, took the view that "not everybody comes into teaching with the ability to build relationships straight up." That is, some pre-service teachers needed more direction than others in building relationships with their students. Knowing their pre-service teachers well also enabled them to build capacity for initiative. "Some would take more initiative than others, and so it was just around giving them time to develop initiative versus just telling them what to do" (Stephanie).

Laura provided an example of a mentor teacher who demonstrated empathy and relational thoughtfulness when dealing with a lack of initiative. She talked about how she thought about what she had been like when she started teaching:

> She was a fairly quiet person. I was a little bit like that. … Knowing how she could be, helped me sort of track her into that direction. … encouraging her to be herself. … Because it's all about the being, the person.

Laura took a consciously positive orientation to her pre-service teacher's tentativeness and withdrawal from interaction with students, "I had to be the teacher of the student teacher more." Maintaining the relationship was vital and it had to be responsibly worked at. "There were a few little bumps along the way. … there were times when my expectations of her didn't work and I had to say, look I've asked you to do this but

it hasn't happened." Laura was clear that "I think you have to have a belief that the [pre-service teacher] is going to be great at the end."

Other participants also mentioned it was important for their mentoring practice to be guided by a belief in a positive outcome for their pre-service teacher. Susan claimed, "you've got to have the belief that they can succeed in what they're going to do." Barbara explained that the mentor teacher role meant that mentor teachers needed to be "open-minded that here is someone who really wants to learn and how can I best support them to do that. … I think everyone can achieve." Hence, a belief in the capacity of the pre-service teacher to learn is tied to this mentor teacher's acceptance of responsibility as their teacher. Laura acknowledged that her pre-service teacher might have failed, she "was on that cusp." Laura explained how she talked about this and demonstrated the centrality of maintaining connection and responsibility for the relationship:

> There were lots of conversations and a few tears, all that kind of thing. … I know you're really struggling and I'm really worried that you might not pass. These are some things that we need to try and work on and it's really hard. I remember coming back in the next day and she was very quiet. It was almost like she didn't want to talk to me and I thought, oh God, this is going to be tricky. I think we got over that and I just had to say to her, look I have every faith in you that you're going to get there at the end.

Interestingly, it is this belief in the pre-service teacher's capacity to learn, that Katrina moved towards in the course of her interview. In these PiTE schools the cultural emphasis for some time before the PiTE program was established was that all children can learn and teachers have a responsibility to see that they did. This positive

orientation to learning appeared to have occurred to Katrina as she was talking about there being aspects "you can't teach" because later she exclaimed, "Now I know that this might sound like it's contradicting some of the other stuff but you need to believe that everyone can learn everything."

For Christine, developing an understanding that not all pre-service teachers were naturals was a tough process. This insight invited her to think about how she might need to take greater responsibility for the relationship with her pre-service teachers. She commented:

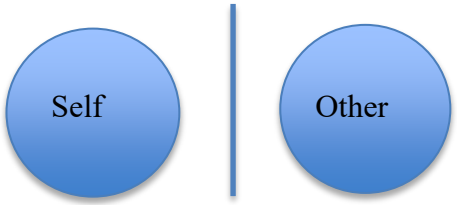
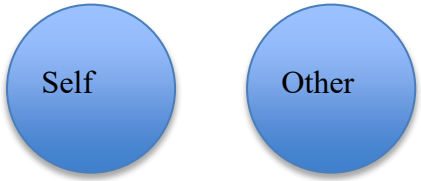
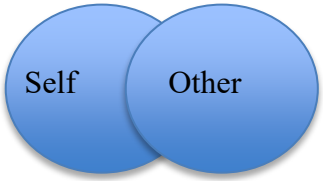
> This is where I see my weakness is. Maybe I needed to have these conversations with my pre-service teacher and suggest to them, did you notice this is what happened, this is why I do this. Probably something I thought would have come more with initiative and did, for some of my [pre-service teachers].

Finally, establishing connection and a mutual learning stance invited some mentor teachers to acknowledge they were learning from their pre-service teacher. Jackie, for instance commented that, "you need to be really open to – that they might know something we don't know as well and that's okay." John talked about learning more about improving his own teaching through watching his pre-service teachers, "I remember actually learning a lot from them." The nuances communicated by mentor teachers appeared influenced by their view of how one learns to teach together with expectations about what an adult should be bringing to the learning context.

Table 4.1 provides a summary and overview of the continuum of connection that is suggested by the data described above.

Table 4.1

Being Relational: A Continuum of Connection

Illustration of connection	Barrier between self and other 	Perceived separation between self and other 	Mutuality and interconnection of self and other 
Assumption of connection			
Illustrative quotes	"do whatever you'd like to do for your time in the room … very much left to your own devices" (Alan) [Having a pre-service teacher is] "an easy four weeks and don't really do a lot at all" (Chloe)	"I don't know whether you can teach it … it's just a quality" (Lisa) "There are some things you can't teach and there are some things that have to be there" (Katrina)	"They don't know what they don't know" (Judy, Kristina, Laura) "real team teaching" (Joe) "sometimes I'll put, now how could we have improved that, 'we', using that 'we'" (Kristina)
Key participants	Memories of: Alan, Carmel, Charles, Kristina and Barbara Comments on colleagues: Chloe, Laura and Steve	Adrienne, Jill, Harry, Katrina and Lisa	Alan, Kristina, Barbara, Carmel, Stephanie, Joe and Elizabeth

Key features	The mentor teacher's classroom is provided to practice what has been learned elsewhere. The mentor teacher "gets out of the way".	The focus is on what the pre-service teacher, as an individual, will bring or not bring to their practice teaching.	The focus is on how the mentor teacher takes responsibility for mediating the practice of learning to teach. A key focus is on learning to move the students' learning forward.
Key Beliefs	Teaching is learned through experience over time and it is not the mentor teacher's responsibility to be a teacher of teaching. The classroom is a place to practice what has been learned in the ITE institution.	Some pre-service teachers were naturals who 'had it' or 'got it' Pre-service teachers need to come with "a quality" Some have an innate ability Need to come with initiative Need to have well developed social skills Some pre-service teacher teachers are 'good' and 'right'	Learning to teach doesn't come naturally They don't know what they don't know Initiative can be fostered Social skills can be developed Everyone can achieve Everyone is different

This Table 4.1draws on a model used by Hlava and Elfers (2014) that is a visual representation of the self-other connection. They in turn sourced the model from Aron, Aron and Smollan (1992). In this use of the model the 'self' stands for the mentor teacher and the 'other' stands for the pre-service teacher. The arrow represents the experience of connectivity and the dissolution of the self/other boundary.

4.5 Synthesis and Summary

This chapter provides a part answer to the research question: *How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?* Participants understood that their role required them to be relational. In interpreting the data it was seen that there were both agreements and shades of difference about what constituted being relational in the mentor teacher role.

Before the central relationship between mentor teacher and pre-service teacher was outlined the data communicated the network of relationships in which the mentor teacher was enmeshed. All participants were in agreement that relationships with students were fundamental as a foundation for learning and addressing challenges. In these PiTE schools collegial relationships were also highly valued. These relationships required an ongoing investment of time, interpersonal effort and sophisticated sensitivity to how one's demeanour and language influenced the response of another person, be they student or colleague.

It is when the focus turns to the relationship between mentor teachers and pre-service teachers that it is possible to discern both agreements and contrasts in the views expressed by these participants. All mentioned the importance of providing emotional, nurturing support for their pre-service teacher. All talked about bringing confidence as teachers to their relationship with their pre-service teacher. All noted that they were continuing to make mistakes and they were comfortable acknowledging this with their pre-service teacher.

The contrasts came when the talk moved to their sense of how pre-service teachers learn to teach and the extent to which they were viewing this person as a learner in the classroom or as an adult who should know what they wanted to learn.

Some mentor teachers talked about pre-service teachers as 'naturals' while others stated that learning to teach did not come "naturally". Some believed that matters such as social skills and initiative could not be taught while other mentor teachers demonstrated how they gradually accommodated these gaps and purposefully fostered their development, while working to maintain a positive relationship.

Finally, while all the mentor teachers were appreciative of the contribution of their pre-service teacher to the work of both school and classroom some participants talked about how they were learning together with their pre-service teacher. This smaller number of mentor teachers stressed connection and mutuality through their talk of being "equals" and a "team" learning together about puzzles of practice with particular students in specific contexts. They demonstrated a heightened sense of responsibility for the hard work of forming and sustaining the relationship with their pre-service teacher (Refer Table 4.1 above).

Taking conscious responsibility for the relationship also suggested having a strong sense of purpose in their role. This sense of purpose was demonstrated by some mentor teachers through their careful choice of inclusive language; positioning themselves as continuing to learn bout teaching; empathising with their pre-service teachers as learners; explicitly considering what was involved in learning to teach and being thoughtful in sequencing this learning, always with the relationship in mind. The following chapter takes up the matter of purpose in the mentor teacher role and discusses the ways in which these mentor teachers understood their role as being intentional.

Chapter 5

Findings: Being Intentional

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided an important part answer to my research question: *How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?* Mentor teachers saw it as "essential" to establish a connection with their pre-service teacher. That is, being intentional in the mentor teacher role began by taking responsibility for the relationship. However, as the previous chapter demonstrated, there were variations in these connections between mentor and pre-service teacher.

This chapter further investigates the research question by examining the various ways the mentor teachers understood their role as being intentional. Being intentional involves a deliberateness of purpose, a design or plan behind decisions and actions. In this context being intentional encompassed the mentor teachers' understanding of how their mentoring provided an educative experience. That is, the

extent to which they considered they were teaching their pre-service teachers to teach and thought pedagogically about their role.

At a surface level all participants reported a sense of intentionality in their mentoring role. They talked about planning, modelling, demonstrating, observing and providing feedback to their pre-service teacher. Judy summarised the main approaches as, "I suppose modelling, talking, reading some literature, talking it through, watching and observing them and sort of discussion." However, an exploration of what lay behind the use of these terms revealed subtle variations in how being intentional was understood by these participants.

The data suggested a continuum of intentionality best captured by two uses of the metaphor 'osmosis'. At one end a mentor teacher commented that the pre-service teachers "learnt more just by osmosis from – just hanging out with us" (Miles). 'Osmosis' implies that learning to teach happens for pre-service teachers when they are immersed in the classroom and that one can assume the appropriate teaching behaviours, and the decisions behind them, will be absorbed, as it were, through the skin. Making these assumptions left much learning to teach to chance.

This view contrasted with Stephanie's assertion that, "It's not osmosis." When mentor teachers were consciously intentional they appeared to have a well-developed sense of what being a pre-service teacher and learning to teach entailed and they talked about the role differently. They used terms such as 'explicit', 'focus', 'scaffold', 'very structured', and 'gradual release of responsibility'. They talked about "working alongside", "drilling right into", "spelling it out", and wanting to provide "a strong grounding", a "deep understanding", "skilled observation", and a "think aloud". They indicated that some capabilities needed to be "taught and learned".

The sections that follow explore how the mentor teachers talked about what it meant for them to focus on planning, modelling, demonstrating, observing and supporting the practice of teaching. In each of these sections their reports reveal nuanced variations in how they understood their mentoring role as one that purposefully provided an educative experience for their pre-service teacher.

5.2 Teaching Planning

The data revealed that twenty-four mentor teachers addressed the importance of planning with their pre-service teachers. Learning to plan for teaching was the context for many participants to bring together intentionally: knowledge of students, establishing and maintaining routines, working with the curriculum, thinking about assessing and possible challenges around the students' behaviour. However the reports varied in specificity and the extent to which they revealed that the focus on planning for teaching was purposeful and educative.

5.2.1 Balancing the "Bigger Picture" with Being Flexible

Several participants, (for instance, Alan, Barbara, Carmel, Adrienne, Charles, Kristina and Christine) talked about intentionally moving their pre-service teachers from planning individual lessons to seeing how each lesson fitted within the "bigger picture." The data indicated that in the first place planning for the bigger picture meant developing a yearlong perspective. As Kristina explained, planning involved designing back from "the bigger picture down to the more short-term." This meant working with the Australian curriculum and being clear about the outcomes intended by the year's end. As Alan explained knowing, "where you want children to be at the end of the year … It gives you a timeline to know how long you can focus on things

… helps to know also where to scaffold." Most participants demonstrated that they understood that while many pre-service teachers came with considerable content expertise, they were still learning about how this was translated into the National and school curriculum. Adrienne, Carmel, Charles, Harry and Joe used the term "backward planning model" to describe how they intentionally introduced their pre-service teachers to yearlong planning from the curriculum.

Nevertheless, this capacity to understand the bigger picture needed to be balanced with the ability to deliberately focus their pre-service teachers on learning to be flexible and adaptable, "to have those contingency plans always there ready to go" (John). Some participants were confident that pre-service teachers would learn flexibility from experience and by osmosis. Adrienne, for instance noted, "you don't know what's going to pop up each day … being able to think on your feet and being able to deal with lots of different situations and that comes with experience." Lisa talked about the importance of being able to read the students and make adjustments. She pointed out, "You can't go in with a strict plan of this is what we're going to do, and then get upset because you haven't been able to follow it. So being adaptable but not wishy-washy." Lisa realised, "What they found difficult, is they assumed you write a lesson plan. It all goes to schedule." However when Lisa was asked, "How do you help them read the students? Her reply was, "It's experience, isn't it?" and when invited to say what kind of experience her response was "I don't know." This is an example of how some participants revealed a restricted language that implied a limited understanding of being intentional in their mentoring role.

By contrast, other participants talked about how they purposefully guided their pre-service teachers to "think on your feet." Jackie and John for instance, talked about encouraging their pre-service teachers to plan for students who might complete tasks

before their peers or who were struggling. Several participants emphasised directing their pre-service teachers to plan for contingencies that may arise because of students' behaviour. Tess helped her pre-service teachers "consider some individuals and what their strategy was if x happened or if y happened."

Jill and Kristina demonstrated contrasting views about how to support pre-service teachers consider timing in their planning. Jill believed in learning from experience. She was vague, communicating a sense that osmosis would support learning over time, "Oh that's just practice, isn't it – [you] think [it will] take two minutes whereas in reality, it may take them 20 minutes to do something. So – in the end that's just experience, I guess." On the other hand, Kristina, conscious of the imperative to be very well planned in an infant classroom, made a point of intentionally building in thinking about timing into teaching how to plan, "I talk first about time management … you're against the clock a lot of the time … within the classroom … allowing extra time for things like packing up in kindergarten … incredibly challenging [for a novice]."

5.2.2 Focusing on a Written Plan

Most of these mentor teachers insisted on some form of written planning from their pre-service teachers in order to intentionally prepare them for teaching. Carmel, for instance, stated emphatically that she did not "encourage the in-the-head method." She required something more substantial. Christine, too, was critical of planning that was too scant. She noted that one pre-service teacher was "writing dot point notes as a lesson plan … not even how I plan now." However, for the most part the data indicated participants were not concerned with written plans following some prescribed format. As Alan explained, he understood that "planning needs to fit you.

We're not doing it for a department – it's to help you with your thinking and your structuring."

Most of the secondary school mentor teachers appeared to accept planning formats the pre-service teachers brought from their university course. They wanted, as Katrina remarked, to see "the planning, days in advance, so that they can then talk about the lesson." John and Martin both mentioned that they would talk about a lesson plan before their pre-service teachers taught their class. For Martin this was not necessarily a written plan, "she gave me an idea of a lesson well in advance and then I'd give them feedback." For Martin a verbal report was sufficient.

There was a general vagueness in the language used by the secondary and some primary mentor teachers when they talked about planning. Some implied that pre-service teachers would come with sufficient content knowledge and know how to plan for teaching. Their role was to tweak and advise. For instance, Katrina mentioned she would talk about why parts of a lesson are important. When asked if she was preparing her pre-service teachers to think forward to how they would go about their teaching her response was "I think so." In fact Katrina admitted "I don't do any written planning really anymore but I certainly talk through what I am intending to do." Lucy, working in upper primary was very honest and admitted, "I didn't work well with their planning beforehand."

By contrast a small number of mentor teachers, particularly those teaching infant classes (Barbara, Kristina, Alan and Laura), spoke about deliberately teaching their pre-service teachers how to plan and emphasised the importance of having a well developed written plan. As Kristina explained, "I wanted to give my pre-service teacher a really strong grounding in how we plan for teaching." For Kristina this meant being, "able to equip my pre-service teachers with planning proforma that were

efficient, that had a really strong focus on learning outcomes, and links made with the Early Years Framework." Alan was even more explicit and talked about having a set of criteria he would help his pre-service teachers apply to their planning. Alan's criteria included:

> Does your plan link to the curriculum? Are there learning intentions? Does it have guiding questions, understanding goals? Does it have a hook? Does it have assessment? Is there a sequence of learning that goes through the gradual release model? Is there an area for self-reflections? Is it a document that is fluid – that can change if needs be?

Having this degree of specificity about what to look for in a plan enhanced Alan's capacity to assume the stance of being a teacher of planning. He had the language to talk about planning, and the relational capacity to communicate and co-construct meaning about this aspect of teaching work.

This group of infant-based mentor teachers communicated a detailed sense of what counts as good planning and also pedagogical thoughtfulness about how to make this thinking accessible for their pre-service teachers. This requirement for pedagogical awareness was well exemplified by Laura and Kristina. Laura noted that talk about their planning decisions, "what's in my head" is challenging because you "really have to think about how to make planning accessible for the pre-service teacher." As Kristina pointed out, when experienced teachers focused on planning they needed to understand the difference between their expertise, where "so much of the detail of planning is in my head, just headings carry extensive meaning," and the needs of pre-service teachers who are novices in the planning process.

Furthermore, they indicated an intentional pedagogical approach to the process of teaching planning. Alan, for instance, provided detail about gradually supporting a

learning to plan process that moved sequentially from his sharing of his own yearly plan to mutual planning:

> I like to work alongside with them. … I sat and shared that with them but also how I got to that point, so we went backwards through it. … Then when it was time to start looking at unit planning, I was doing like a think-aloud with them. So I would say I'm going to the curriculum and I'm pulling this element down and I'm doing this, now I'm going here for my resources, so first of all modelling the process. When it was time for them to then implement a plan, we worked together to do it.

By "thinking aloud", Alan intentionally made his decision-making visible and accessible for his pre-service teacher.

Barbara also described a gradual scaffolded process. She modelled moving from the "bigger picture" to the weekly and daily planning and then "we co-planned together and then I let her independently plan." Both Alan and Barbara grounded learning to plan in their interconnected and supportive relationship with their pre-service teacher. Alan "worked alongside" while Barbara demonstrated awareness that the novice would not necessarily notice the minutiae that were a significant part of the planning process and understood that, as the mentor teacher, she needed to spell this out.

5.2.3 Planning with the Students in Mind

All mentor teachers stressed that their pre-service teachers had to learn to plan for the wide range of student abilities in their classes. Judy challenged the thinking that plans could be brought to a classroom without knowing the students "I think

people think ‘oh I can plan everything before I meet these children’. It doesn’t work, it’s fraught with failure.”

Several mentor teachers used the concept “differentiating” to describe planning to accommodate specific children and the range of abilities in these classrooms. Kristina explained that planning for the year involved “drilling right into planning for a session, planning for an individual child, planning for a small group, being able to differentiate the learning.” Harry believed “differentiation around the learning … [is] something that has to be taught and learned.” Many emphasised that they worked with their pre-service teachers to understand the effort and depth of understanding that is required in planning to differentiate. Chloe explained that differentiating was “a deep understanding. It’s not just going and looking on the surface. You only know how to deal with situations when you’ve really taken the time to get to know those children.”

Several mentor teachers, particularly those in secondary schools, commented on intentionally moving their pre-service teachers on from planning for content ‘delivery’ to the “imperative to know the children as learners” (Claire). This meant assisting the pre-service teachers in adjusting their assumptions and expectations about background knowledge and grade level. Jill acknowledged that “learning about expectations or where to pitch their thinking and their work towards the students. … is one of the hardest things to do.” Adrienne warned her pre-service teachers to be aware of assumptions they might be making about students. She would say to the pre-service students “break it down, remember the students … know nothing. … Not assuming they know it … and making sure you had something for every level.” Marcus explained that, “It’s making what’s on paper come to life in a classroom setting” and he “had to support her a little bit with expectation for what she thought in

her mind a grade 8 student would be able to do this, and then I guess underlying that was the importance of differentiation."

Some mentor teachers stressed that their pre-service teachers had to be intentionally supported to think pedagogically about how they planned with the content. Having the content knowledge was important but not sufficient because as Martin emphasised it was about:

> Getting the students wanting to access that content that you've got. … the vehicle for that, are the tasks and the activities that you give them. So it's about getting them to think about okay, how can I create, how can I design tasks the students will engage in and that will further their learning?

Claire too emphasised "the content is almost irrelevant … the bigger learning is going from that focusing on task to thinking about the learning and moving students forward." Claire and other mentor teachers used the term "move" to emphasise their pre-service teachers must learn to focus on the students' progress, growth and learning. Barbara noted she would talk to her pre-service teachers about "what next and why – what might I need to do in my planning or my practice to move those students."

Thinking about "moving the students forward" entailed some mentor teachers (for instance Alan, Barbara Claire, Judy, Elizabeth and Martin) emphasising planning for teaching as a sequence rather than single lessons that are sometimes a feature of the short practicum sessions. This involved becoming more thoughtful about intentionally focusing their pre-service teachers on "reading the students" and the assessment of students' ongoing progress and purposefully encouraging them to use this information in their planning. Judy outlined how she would explain to a pre-

service teacher the importance of using assessment information to construct sequences of learning that were specifically targeted to the needs of particular children:

> So it's not just a series of this is what I'm going to do this day, this is what I'll do this day. It's about okay, this lesson didn't work well. These children didn't get it, so I've got to now plan that for my next day. You're not a relief teacher. You're actually planning to move children forward.

Judy's report included not only the focus on using assessment data but also the requirement for pre-service teachers to learn that planning with students in mind required flexibility. Judy went on to describe how she would collect observation notes of the students to inform planning about "where to next? So the whole process of teaching evolves from that one lesson into something else. It's not about just having it all planned out on paper beautifully, because it probably won't work that way."

Alan demonstrated the way planning needed to adapt and change in response to what you learn about your students' understanding. He deliberately showed his pre-service teachers how he planned in pencil, "constantly rubbing it out or editing and changing" because:

> If in the moment of teaching we realise they haven't got the concept well enough to move on to the next part, well then we go back to the unit plan and we add in another part to it. So it's a fluid document.

Alan also communicated here that he was focused on teaching for understanding and that he valued the mutuality of the relationship with his pre-service teacher.

5.3 Modelling, Demonstrating and Observing

The data indicated that all the mentor teachers mentioned demonstrating aspects of teaching and modelling good practice. For Carmel, "observing quality practice – that's a huge one." Some interpreted being intentional as simply having the pre-service teacher accompany them throughout the day. They relied on the pre-service teacher's capacity to notice, interpret and question what they observed. That is they demonstrated confidence in the osmosis approach to learning to teach. Other mentor teachers took a conscious intentional stance towards their responsibility to model good teaching. Alan explained his position this way:

> I agree they need to get in and do it; … but there shouldn't be a teaching emphasis straightaway because our job is to model what to do and when they're straightaway into teaching, there's not the opportunity to see what we're doing.

As we have seen some participants modelled planning but they also talked about how they intentionally modelled putting up learning intentions for the students; running and setting up group rotations; giving instructions and explanations; making transitions between activities; moving from the classroom to another part of the school; ways to build relationships; teaching text types; teaching social skills; talking with parents; reading a story and being animated; collecting evidence on student progress and assessment; how you use your voice and interact with the children; and how to be assertive. Kristina explained that having a pre-service teacher in her classroom encouraged her to think intentionally and pedagogically about her mentoring role: "you have to be very, very well prepared to take a lesson. … you do

have to unpack it so much more and decide now how will I demonstrate this and what will she get out of that."

5.3.1 Providing a Focus

The data suggested that deliberately providing a focus for the pre-service teachers' classroom observation was a choice that distinguished between mentor teachers who were intentional in directing attention to the specific detail of teaching from those who appeared to rely on learning through 'osmosis'.

Several mentor teachers communicated that they were not intentional about their pre-service teachers' observation of their teaching. They expressed confidence that observing their practice would automatically lead to learning by their pre-service teacher. Sometimes learning was meant to follow observation without either focus or follow-up conversations that would make meaning about what had been observed. Jill provided an example of this approach:

> I would be modelling what I would be doing, without doing it formally. But they would be – because they're in the midst of everything, they would be actually seeing it without me saying now you need to watch this. Without sort of saying this is what I'm doing and why I'm doing it. So they just become – it just becomes part of the culture.

Joe did not provide a focus but he set out to talk about what the pre-service teachers observed, "Well I never actually said, watch how I do it. But afterwards I would say to them, why do you think I did this? Why do you think I spoke to such-and-such about …?"

For one mentor teacher, Lucy, observation was avoided. She explained that she found it, "hard to have them just watch and observe, and I probably did expect

them to step-in and take part, because that's how you learn." For Lucy 'doing' was privileged and she communicated a sense she was uncomfortable with being observed, or she was not sure what might be learned through observation.

Other participants suggested that explaining the thinking behind what was being modelled was not always a priority. In the secondary context Katrina made the point that "you have to be conscious in what you do as a teacher." However, when asked if she explained this sense of consciousness to her pre-service teacher she replied self critically, "I don't think I ever have. I don't think I ever have. Probably should have."

For Barbara, Christine and Carmel there seemed to be no need to focus their pre-service teachers' observations because they appeared to be picking up, or mimicking, what to do without direction. Barbara's pre-service teacher "started doing it exactly how I had modelled to her to do it. I think that's their initiative I guess to be able to do that without direction from me." Christine observed, "This is how we move here to here, and this is what we do here – they were probably picking up on those routines without me probably acknowledging or noticing too much. Because it wasn't really something I had to address." Several mentor teachers described how their pre-service teachers seemed to take on board what they were observing, 'naturally'. Barbara found that her pre-service teachers "just pick it up," and Judy noted, "one was very natural."

When learning to teach appeared to be picked up 'naturally' it seemed to communicate to a mentor teacher that one's reputation as a good teacher, and the opportunity to spend a year with you in your classroom was an adequate support for a pre-service teacher's learning to teach. Considering learning to teach as something

that happened through osmosis was reinforced because the visual feedback received by the mentor teacher invited the belief that observation was sufficient.

Christine, however, provided an example of a mentor teacher who had this understanding of her role interrupted and challenged by a pre-service teacher who did not demonstrate she was learning by osmosis. When learning from observation did not happen by osmosis Christine was forced to think more deeply about intentions, and interventions. She reported one pre-service teacher, who appeared to believe that when the lesson was finished:

> I'm done. It was that classroom management and routine and structure that we had to bring to her attention, that that's just as important as the effectiveness of that addition maths lesson that you've just taught. It's not just about intervals of teaching; it's about running a classroom.

This meant Christine had to focus intentionally on teaching about the routines she initially expected to be "picked up naturally" from observation. She had to explicitly intervene and revealed how her concern for the feelings of the other played out through her growing wish to confront the issues she was observing. "It was tricky to address, too, because you don't want to undermine what they already can and already are demonstrating." That is, dealing with the emotional dimensions of relationships impinged on her capacity to be intentional and to intervene. Having these conversation pushed Christine, "out of my comfort zone" and highlighted the potential for the emotional complexity in this relationship when matters needed to be addressed explicitly.

Carmel was another participant who learned she had been making assumptions about what a pre-service teacher will pick up through their observation. She reported a time when she asked her pre-service teacher to manage a transition, "We both

thought, this will be right, they're just getting their lunch boxes. But it turned into quite a shemozzle, and then we both sat back and went, ah!" This learning was not planned but the surprise about what transpired provided insights for Carmel about how she was making assumptions about what was being "picked up" through observation of her practice. She was invited to consider what she knew about giving instructions and managing transitions that her pre-service teacher did not, as yet, understand.

Chloe, Stephanie and Rita talked about how they decided it was important to intentionally provide a focus of their pre-service teachers' observations. Chloe reported she became more intentional over her five years with PiTE:

> Towards the end. Not at the beginning, because we didn't really think about it, but towards the end with the observations, whether it was to do with the questioning or the way they taught something or the way they had the children, whatever it might have been, then we focused the observations, but in the first probably two, maybe three years it was much more general.

For Stephanie her decision to be intentional around focusing observations grew out of her own experience as a pre-service teacher when "I didn't know what I was looking for, I was actually bored. … so I tell them that this is your focus." For Rita it was a realisation that pre-service teachers are "not experienced enough to know what the really important things were out of that," that led her to provide a specific focus. Tess had learned that it was important to make the "small things explicit" because novices tend not to notice these aspects of a teacher's work "unless it's pointed out you don't know it." Directing attention, or developing the capacity to notice, was an important aspect of intentionality in the mentor teacher role.

The data revealed that several participants, in particular Claire, Kristina, Laura and Stephanie, believed that the provision of a focus to guide looking was a critical component of intentional modelling. Kristina, for instance, commented that she encouraged a lot of observation of her teaching early on and that it "has to be quite directed … I don't just leave a student to just sit and look… I'll be saying when I'm taking this lesson this is what I want you to look at." Claire had "them look at what I do with this today" and used what she called "pointed prompting" to make sure her pre-service teachers would see what she wanted them to see, "sort of opening those blinkers to the wider context of where they were."

Laura and Stephanie demonstrated how they intentionally provided a focus and followed observation with purposeful talk led by thoughtful questioning to invite analysis and reflection. Laura, an infant teacher, stressed how her demonstrations happened in a "planned way … today I'm going to show you how to model reading a story." She emphasised that when she was modelling a teaching approach she would intentionally encourage her pre-service teacher to be the one articulating what was happening:

> I'd ask her, what did you observe? What did you notice? What did I do? What did the children do? So it was trying to, rather than me always trying to give her the answers, it was more of what did she see?

Stephanie, a secondary school teacher, was also intentional about providing a focus for observation. She demonstrated how a focused observation should be followed by purposeful talk:

> I have a focus each lesson, so one focus would be I'd like you to watch what I do with this student, or it might be this group of people, and they've got to actually write down what I do in that lesson with those

> students or that particular student. Then I ask them why do you think I did that?

Even when the modelling was intentional pre-service teachers did not always notice or understand what was being demonstrated. An intentional approach to intervention was sometimes necessary. Diane provided a good example of a lead mentor teacher intervening to assist a pre-service teacher see the skills and decisions that were being modelled by the mentor teacher because "we needed to watch this good operator together, so that I can … really hone-in-on what the teacher was doing to make that happen, because it just doesn't happen."

5.3.2 Modelling as a Scaffold into Practice

Modelling or demonstrating an aspect of teaching practice was an intentional strategy some mentor teachers used to scaffold pre-service teachers into practice. Kristina, for instance, commented on the subtle transition a pre-service teacher makes from observer to doer:

> It's not until they actually start taking the lessons themselves that they understand the importance of all those variables. When you watch a lesson it can be very easy to think, gosh that seems simple … it might look easy but until you've done it yourself it is absolutely not.

Laura discovered her pre-service teacher needed more support than she had expected to provide. She had to become a more educative mentor teacher and:

> be the teacher of the student teacher more. … I had to model a lot more. I had to show her more of how to teach rather than expecting her to go and plan a lesson and go and do it.

Laura and Elizabeth, from their infant and secondary school perspectives, provided examples of thoughtful intentional demonstrations of teaching they used as exemplars before supporting their pre-service teachers' practice. Following routines may look simple, however, as reported above, pre-service teachers did not always notice the nuances of what made them work successfully. Laura demonstrated routines for moving children from one part of the school to another:

> Like the transition from say the classroom to the gym to do PE or I'd say, 'well this is how I do it, we stop here at this line, making sure everyone's ready', then we move to the next part. So you're not having everyone in a great big line. Then I'd say, 'well your turn now, you do it, off you go'.

Elizabeth modelled how to conduct feedback conversations with her secondary students:

> Then letting them have a go at one of those conversations, whether it be a really positive conversation or one that was a bit of an iffy conversation. …I think they definitely need some experience in and some time to build some confidence around doing this.

Modelling aspects of teaching also required intentionally providing time to talk about what had been observed. Several mentor teachers described how they worked at embedding this talk in the teaching moment revealing the thinking behind their teaching. Alan explained that in his infant class he was "constantly talking out loud and saying what I'm doing … so they know what's going on and what you're thinking." Charles, in his primary classroom, noted he was able to use the time when his primary students were doing tasks to talk with his pre-service teacher because:

> To successfully impart an understanding of what you're doing you have to be talking in the moment with the pre-service teacher all the time. … So what did I do there? What did you just see me do? … just really talking through all of the different choices you make every day.

John, a secondary teacher, also made time for "teaching while I was teaching", when the students were on an assigned task.

5.4 Supporting Practice Teaching

The mentor teachers all saw their role as one that gave the pre-service teachers the opportunity to learn to teach in and from experience in the classroom. John commented "learning on the job is probably the best way of becoming a teacher." This view was a common one and while most mentor teachers also valued the "academic stuff" (Katrina), these participants clearly welcomed having the time, provided by the PiTE program, to build an awareness of the "complexities of teaching" (Charles). Chloe talked about the importance of being "immersed in everything we had to do," and believed "you learn through actually doing, … experience is huge."

Most of the mentor teachers (27) stressed the importance of more time in the classrooms. In some reports they expressed their frustration with the short practice sessions describing them for instance as "just seeing snippets of three weeks here and four weeks there" (John). Their language communicated the challenge of being purposeful when little time is provided for the classroom component of initial teacher education.

There were also comments that implied a belief that more time for experience in the classroom was of itself sufficient for learning to teach well. Martin, for instance

believed that "the more time you've got in front of the class, the more practice you've got in front of the class, the better." Katrina and Lucy also implied that experience in classrooms was sufficient for teaching a pre-service teacher how to teach. Katrina, for instance, maintained:

> There needs to be more time in schools and not less. … The background is good and it's necessary but you almost need like an apprenticeship system. … You follow someone and you learn through doing. Because teaching is a very much a doing profession and it's not a writing about profession. … So the more they do, the better they'll be.

Lucy emphasised the continuing nature of learning from experience in classrooms, and again privileged time in class:

> Learning is lifelong and the more experience they have in an environment where they're working, the better it is for them in the end. You can talk until you're blue in the face, I can tell you how to do something, but until you're actually there doing it, and you learn by teaching. … The more time you've got in front of the class, the more practice you've got in front of the class, the better.

Lucy's comment captures the limitations of transferring what one has been told into practice. She separated telling from doing, privileging the latter. Katrina and Lucy did not acknowledge that learning poor teaching practice was as possible as learning the good practice they imply is learned from them. They appeared to assume that the pre-service teacher will take the appropriate meaning from an experience and that this will inevitably result in good teaching. However, making meaning about a complex experience such as teaching is likely to be enhanced from the talk between mentor and pre-service teacher. Katrina and Lucy do not appear to understand the

place of mediating talk about classroom experience and their role as intentional mediators.

Several participants, for instance Alan, Barbara, Charles, Patricia and Claire, strongly implied that they were transferring insights about their students as learners to an understanding that their pre-service teachers were learners. The subsequent understanding was that they took responsibility to ensure their mentoring role was an educative one. They acknowledged that both students and pre-service teachers benefitted from a conscious decision to scaffold learning and the application of what a few participants called the gradual release of responsibility. Alan described his mentoring approach as "gradual release helping," while Barbara explained that she was drawing on how she went about being explicit with the children about learning intentions and transferred this approach to her role as mentor teacher. Charles made the same point by stating "I guess it's the same things you'd do with your students." Patricia specifically described her approach as a gradual release of responsibility and explained, "I'm a firm believer in explicit teaching in the classroom with my students. So therefore, I also explicitly teach my uni students." Finally Claire maintained, "They're actually no different to a student. You can't say you can't do this. You have to scaffold it for them, [or consider] how you will get them to a point". That is, Claire believed mentor teachers needed to have learning intentions for their pre-service teacher. They should be explicit about these intentions and expectations and have clarity about how to facilitate the journey to the "point" or intended outcome.

5.4.1 Providing a Sequence for Participation

To build confidence and competence several mentors demonstrated they consciously thought about sequencing learning to teach for their pre-service teachers.

As Alan expressed it, “teaching’s not something you just come and do.” Rather, he communicated a sense that he was responsible for an adult learner, was using the classroom time intentionally and was evolving a learning to teach curriculum.

Sequencing implied mentor teachers had an understanding of where to start the learning to teach process. Next they demonstrated relational awareness by deliberately assessing readiness for new challenges that built the learning in a safe way so as to “to keep that confidence up” (Alan). At the start of the school year, as reported in the previous chapter, most participants talked about first directing their pre-service teachers to build relationships with the students. They considered building rapport a key point of intentionality in their educative role. They demonstrated getting-to-know-you games, introduced social skills activities, and identified children the pre-service teacher should know well. Several reported using the opportunities provided by outside duty and sports rosters, to discover background stories and learn about families. John intentionally encouraged his pre-service teachers to “get around, work the crowd and make sure you’re building those connections with them, and not just in the classroom … if you’re sports minded go and have a kick of the football.”

For those participants who talked about providing a sequence for learning to teach the next step was to invite pre-service teachers to participate in the classroom routines. These regular procedures were considered important because they built predictability and created calm, safe and settled classrooms. Kristina, in her Kinder/Prep class, emphasised why, “how to develop a classroom – the organization of the classroom right from the first day” mattered to her, “they need to have the routines of the classroom really, really, firmly placed. Without that the learning can’t occur. The class must be settled.”

Routines included the classroom rules: how to line up, walk to lunch, walk around the corridors, eat our fruit, sit next to each other on the mat, "this is where our things are kept, this is how we pack up our room" (Christine). Alan explained that routines help the "children feel like they know what's going on and what's happening next." In some of the secondary schools routines included a consistent approach to the structure of lessons across subjects. Jackie talked about focusing her pre-service teachers on "start up and pack up routines because that's often the deal breaker." Martin described the "common practices" as "bell-work, learning intentions and success criteria".

For some mentor teachers, directing their pre-service teacher to set up and enact routines was a strategy they used to encourage their pre-service teachers' gradual participation in classroom work without the burden of time spent planning for teaching. Diane summed up the view that it was important to take on the routines early because it was an "opportunity to practice that [not just sit back and observe]. … I'd be encouraging them more quickly to take on the routines." Taking on the teacher role, even in small ways, was a strategy that built confidence.

In addition to taking responsibility for the routines in the classroom several participants implied thinking pedagogically when they talked about starting the pre-service teacher's participation with "small things." Elizabeth talked about starting with "simple things" and providing scaffolds that involved her pre-service teachers "in little parts that I was doing if I was adapting the unit or if I was sitting down doing some marking to show them how we might have put the rubric together." Jackie gave "little components to try." and encouraged her pre-service teacher to work "with small groups initially, getting their confidence with relationships with kids." Christine started with one-on-one work such as listening to a student read or playing a small

word game with a student, “then it’s not such a daunting experience when they have to step in and take the whole class…. I definitely tried to scaffold that.”

Several mentor teachers emphasised that intentionally sequencing learning to teach was a slow and gradual process. Stephanie stressed the need for patience. She commented that, “all the little things all need to be broken down step by step … It’s a slow process.” Alan described starting with the “basic stuff” and he intentionally allowed his pre-service teachers to experience the potential chaos of transitions as a basis for learning:

> I love it when we’re sitting on the mat and then they [pre-service teachers] say okay, ‘off to your tables’ and then there’s this herd of elephants, they go running. In reflection you go let’s try next time, just to send a table at a time or boys first or girls first and seeing how that works. Then having the discussion afterwards … so how did that feel for you?

Alan aimed to build the pre-service teacher’s confidence with everyday movements before focussing more directly on teaching. He also communicated an appreciation that learning to teach was as much about the affective “how did that feel for you?” as it was about a cognitive or even a technical skill dimension.

Carmel described how she designed a sequence for learning to teach and emphasised how she kept the learning “very gradual.” This is a good example of pedagogical thinking with a learner in mind.

> We started very small. So, the responsibilities were getting lunch. Then we included it to bringing them in from the line – like from recess and lunch, so then doing a mat time, where she would introduce a whole class topic. Then we’d break off into small group rotations, but I was

> still here doing a small group rotation and so was she. But it was very gradual. … I didn't want to just throw her straight in and say, you go for it, because I think it's good to see good practice.

Carmel went on to describe how she purposefully assisted her pre-service teacher to transition gradually into taking responsibility for teaching a small group. Her pre-service teacher:

> Might have watched me deliver a whole-class teaching lesson on a number on the mat – a maths concept. Then we would break into small groups, and so she could watch me take my small group, and then we talked about that. Then, the next week, she still would have watched me deliver the whole class lesson, but she would have taken her own small teaching group … it was very gradual.

As Christine observed, "each step is a stepping stone to taking the class."

5.4.2 Responding to Student Behaviour

All the mentor teachers agreed that this was, as Judy described it, "one of the most difficult areas." Most participants believed that they needed to make explicit the school's policy on behaviour and ensure their pre-service teachers incorporated consistent language and approaches when dealing with situations. Martin mentioned teaching the "little things" that were part of the school's consistent approach. "There's a lot of little things that go into it. For example, proximity, this is what we do. This is how we do it." Stephanie was conscious that many positive behaviour practices needed to be clearly pointed out to the pre-service teachers because she had noted, "I don't think a lot of the time they observe the small management things that you might do, for instance, sitting next to them." Stephanie understood that the subtle nuances of

teacher behaviour needed to be intentionally made explicit to pre-service teachers. What they were observing required mediation.

Many mentor teachers made clear they were sensitive to the challenges around interpreting policy for particular students. Making judgements in the moment was more ambiguous than a simple translation of school rules into practice. Knowing the students well was essential for interpreting school policy with individuals. Policy documents provided protocols, however interpretation was not straightforward. Marcus explained the ambiguity involved in interpreting situations, "sometimes there's black and white and sometimes there's grey, and explaining that to a pre-service teacher or a beginning teacher is really quite challenging at times." Alan and Chloe both talked about how "the way we get to our consistency might be a little bit different for each child" (Alan). Lisa also noted that it was:

> Hard for them to understand the school's discipline policy. Striking a balance between following through with that policy and also working with the students and gaining their rapport. So it's really a fine line between 'I've got to follow the discipline policy' – which means I'm meant to do this – and building rapport with them on the other hand, is really challenging for some pre-service teachers.

Learning to be consistent was what these mentor teachers emphasised. However, for the pre-service teachers this was "what they struggle with the most" (Alan).

The other main message was that pre-service teachers needed to learn to respond to their students positively. Charles acknowledged that being positive needed to be learned it was not sufficient to simply rely on the pre-service teacher having the "right" personality. Hence, he would stress with his pre-service teachers, "being explicit to train yourself to be positive with the students." Charles viewed his role as

intentionally supporting his pre-service to learn how to be positive, and, as we saw in the previous chapter, Charles understood that not all pre-service teachers find it easy to form relationships with the students.

Most participants expressed the view that managing behaviour needed to be learned in and from experience. In particular, all the mentor teachers believed that pre-service teachers needed to "have a go" at managing children's behaviour because neither reading about strategies nor seeing good practice was as useful as "being in the moment" (Alan) and reflecting on the experience afterwards. What was emphasised was the requirement to learn from and in the moment of challenging experiences, something that was almost visceral: the need to learn from how you felt, thought and acted in the moment. Subsequently, the thinking, emotions and actions of the moment had to be talked through and debriefed.

There were variations in how mentor teachers believed they would support learning in the moment. A few mentor teachers such as Adrienne asserted that behaviour management is another of those things that "you can't really teach", and Judy acknowledged that, "it's hard to teach." Charles explained:

> Reading something on a document or a plan is so hard to put into context until you're in the moment. Even watching someone model behaviour management is quite different to you having to do it. So I think behaviour management is something that is really hard to learn until you're in the moment.

Tess made a similar point bringing together the need to be purposeful in balancing knowledge of the school policy with an understanding of a particular student together with anticipating what you might do:

> The behaviour stuff in the classroom sometimes can only come from practise. We can talk about it and talk about it and talk about it individually and in meetings but at the end of the day sometimes things just get thrown at you that they have to react to in the moment. They need to have a very clear idea of what they're going to do for that particular student and what the school's policy is.

Some mentor teachers talked about how they intentionally worked at making this "in the moment experience" safe. Katrina reported letting pre-service teachers have the "freedom to do it on your own," but would let them know there would be support "if it started to get out of control I would step in." Alan, however, while still encouraging 'having a go', described how he might intervene, use his dual role as teacher and mentor to model an approach, and provide a focused conversation that mediated understanding about what had happened and why:

> I let them go for a little bit to see how it goes, then I'd interject and I might take over and model and then step back and we can have a discussion about this is why … I think it's something that has to be done in tandem. … What's really difficult for a prac student is they don't necessarily have all the prior understanding about the backgrounds of a lot of the students.

Alan's use of the term "tandem" further emphasises the mutual relational approach he took to purposefully support this challenging aspect of learning to teach.

Several mentor teachers emphasised that establishing control of the classroom was not an end in itself. Rather it was the critical foundation for student learning. Diane saw successful behaviour management as a key demonstration that a pre-

service teacher was “moving forward.” She was very clear about what she was aiming for:

> The classes are settled. There’s learning happening. They’re not just having to focus on behaviour management, but the focus is now on student learning and working and having an understanding of where the children are with their learning. [they have to move beyond being satisfied with quiet] but if not settled first you can’t move beyond that.

Claire commented on how the PiTE program, by providing more time in schools, and, as we saw in the previous chapter, time to build relationships with the students, facilitated a focus on student learning. She explained that for the PiTE pre-service teacher concern about controlling the classroom, “became almost a secondary thing.” Instead “they got to focus on the learning a lot faster. … they’re more confident in their knowledge of the kids and their relationships. They get to that learning part lot faster.”

5.4.3 Assessing the Pre-service Teacher’s Progress

The data suggested that intentionally understanding the pre-service teacher as a learner implied a conscious approach to assessing prior learning and purposefully considering their progress over the year they were in their PiTE schools. Most of the participants talked about assessing progress in broad terms. Many talked about looking for confidence, presence, initiative, enthusiasm and the willingness to have a go and “try things out” in the teaching space. Other participants mentioned judging progress by looking for capacities such as “reading the play” (Marcus).

Other than completing the requirement to check off items on an assessment list for the university, some mentor teachers did not appear to have given this aspect of

their role much thought. As Chloe revealed, critiquing her past approach to assessing pre-service teachers, "way back you just ticked a box because you didn't really understand what it was. How dreadful is that?" However, the data indicated that a small number of participants now had an authentic sense that they intentionally considered assessing the progress of their pre-service teacher as part of their mentoring role. Tess and Stephanie made a point of talking about how they began their mentoring by establishing the needs of their adult learners. Tess, for instance, differentiated her approach by "finding out what their experience has been, what they're like in the classroom and working with them individually because some of them are better at certain bits than others."

A small number of mentor teachers reported how they used observation as a means to judge progress in learning to teach. Kristina observed her pre-service teacher carefully and she noted the planned and deliberate way she went about her observation:

> Basically before the session I will have thought, what does this pre-service teacher need to be showing me or doing during this session to be effective? I may have made some notes of what I'll be looking for. I might have also looked at the criteria that I'm assessing against, given to me by the university.

Kristina went on to explain how she deliberately set out to find the gaps in her pre-service teachers' understanding "through my observation of their teaching … it's very skilled observation." She described watching her pre-service teacher:

> listen to a child read. I very quickly noticed I don't think he's ever sat and listened to a child read before. I wonder what your knowledge of

listening to students read is and your understanding of how to help beginning readers.

Kristina explained that this observation of her pre-service teacher is "really important. Observing a pre-service teacher is probably one of the main ways that I get to know what that person needs." That is, Kristina was not relying on the pre-service teacher knowing what they needed to learn but rather she intentionally made an assessment of gaps in knowledge and capability based on her skilled collection of evidence.

Chloe also used observation to purposefully determine progress. She learned over her time in the PiTE program to be a more intentional observer: "You have to also have the skills to observe. … I think it's much easier when you've got a focus – as a mentor teacher you often observe a lesson as a whole. … It's all very big, general things." Over the last couple of years Chloe learned to focus on a particular aspect and this was "a lot easier and probably a lot more valuable" for supporting the pre-service teachers' progress.

Over the year the mentor teachers assessed their pre-service teachers' readiness to take on more challenges in the classroom. Lucy talked about this as a "fine line between what you need to know and what you're ready for." Other participants reported developing their sense that the pre-service teacher was "moving forward" (Barbara), and looking to see if they were "ready to take on everything" (Rita), managing their stress levels (Claire), and "thinking forward to how they're going to connect the next lesson with the previous lesson" (Lisa). Patricia noted "the sorts of tasks she was using … the different pedagogies," and Susan expected to "see a range of things happening in a classroom during a lesson. … they've been really thoughtful about what they are asking students to do and how they are actually going to be doing it."

A small number of participants talked about how assessing readiness to move forward meant they had to adjust their expectations of their pre-service teacher. Laura emphasised she was a teacher of teaching:

> You sort of think, well you should be at this level, this is where you should be coming in at. It's not always the case. … They're not going to come with all that knowledge that you think, as an experienced teacher they're going to have so you've got to believe that they're there to learn and you're there to teach them.

Nevertheless, the data suggested that the responsibility of formatively assessing progress required greater intentionality and professional learning support.

5.5 Synthesis and Summary

This chapter continued building the answer to the research question: *How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?* The chapter revealed subtle variations in how participants understood being intentional in their mentor teacher role. Mentoring intentionally was communicated through the language these mentor teachers used to describe how they worked with their pre-service teachers. Most referred to teaching pre-service teachers to plan, talked about modelling and demonstrating teaching practice, reported supporting their pre-service teachers' transition into teaching practice, and gradually taking responsibility for the students' learning. On the surface these terms implied all the mentor teachers were being intentional in the same way.

The variations in intentionality emerged as mentor teachers reported the details within each of the broad terms used as the headings in this chapter. These variations in intentionality were framed by the metaphor 'osmosis' used in contrasting

ways by two participants. Mentor teachers who implied their role could rely on osmosis tended to use vague language and avoided specific detail. They talked about pre-service teachers as "very natural" and were confident that the novice would "just pick it up" or notice and understand what they were observing. When pushed to explain their decisions, their answer was often "I don't know." They appeared to believe that learning to teach would come predominantly with and from experience. They did not take responsibility for a relationship with someone learning to teach.

In some cases, this orientation to learning to teach remained unexamined if the pre-service teacher appeared to be taking the appropriate learning 'on board'. When this did not happen, the subsequent surprise meant reviewing assumptions about how a pre-service teacher learns to teach. In turn this meant, for some mentor teachers, making expectations clearer and being more explicit about what was happening in the classroom. That is some mentor teachers became more intentional and educative in their understanding of their mentoring role.

The participants who demonstrated intentionality provided explicit detail about what it meant to teach planning, model teaching and sequence the learning for their pre-service teacher. In addition they also demonstrated a conscious consideration of their pre-service teacher as an adult learner. They perceived that frequently pre-service teachers were "not experienced enough" and "need to know what they are looking for". Significant aspects of the classroom "needed to be pointed out" by directing attention, or "pointed prompting" to "this is what I want you to look at." These mentor teachers asserted a sense of purpose in "making sure they saw what I wanted them to see," directing them to "watch what I do with this … write down what I do." Hence they brought a pedagogical orientation to their intentionality and in this way demonstrated taking responsibility for their adult learner.

From these data it appears essential to consider how one goes about teaching a pre-service teacher in a pedagogical way. There is pedagogical content knowledge in being a teacher of teaching. When the mentor teacher is clear about the priorities or the content that needs to be learned, being intentional requires thought about how this is best scaffolded and sequenced. That is, planning, modelling, demonstrating, observing, questioning, sequencing and assessing what counts as progress all need careful explicit consideration. This demands an orientation to the mentoring role that is more than simply confidence in being a good teacher of students. As this chapter has illustrated taking on the mentoring role requires an additional layer of professional knowledge and competence together with taking responsibility for the relationship.

Finally, in this chapter, there has been mention of the important place of the talk between mentor teacher and pre-service teacher. As Chloe explained, “I don’t think there can be any better way of teaching someone rather than them being immersed in it and then, after the immersion, then sitting down and thinking and talking about why.” What she emphasised was that making sense of experience through mediating reflective talk is critical. How the mentor teachers understood this talk as core to being reflective and the place of reflective conversations is the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 6

Findings: Being Reflective

6.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters discussed how the mentor teachers understood their role as relational and intentional. Both of these concepts were intertwined with the importance these participants placed on being reflective. Being relational, and the extent to which connection involved mutuality, facilitated shared reflective talk about student learning. Being intentional, and explicitly providing an educative experience, enabled reflective conversations to happen in planned and thoughtfully sequenced ways.

This chapter describes how the participants used the concept 'reflection' in respect to understanding their role as mentor teachers. Almost all participants talked about 'reflection' in some way and the few that did not used related terms such as 'debrief' and 'unpack,' or mentioned conversations and discussions that focused on understanding and improving teaching practice. All emphasised the importance they placed on encouraging their pre-service teachers to be thinkers about learning and

teaching. They encouraged their pre-service teachers to reflect on their practice and what it meant to be teaching particular students in PiTE schools. Steve summed up this view when he claimed; “being reflective is the main thing.” Chloe maintained, “It’s all to do with reflection. … How you could have done things better.” When asked what she meant by ‘reflection’ Christine emphasised the important role reflection can have in improving teaching practice. She explained that reflection meant:

> Thinking about … the positives, about what went well. But then, also, I think it’s so important to think about, well, what didn’t work or why didn’t it work, or why wasn’t this child engaged but the rest were engaged. Then thinking about, well what you do differently next time.

However, as in the previous two chapters the responses from participants reveal variations. Other than using the term, some addressed the concept ‘reflection’ barely at all or in broad and general ways. Others reported they used and required specific detail in their reflective talk. Requiring specificity of language communicated how being reflective involved mediating and co-constructing the meaning of learning and teaching with their pre-service teacher.

The sections that follow will address what participants considered to be the purposes for reflection, the priority they gave to student learning as the content for reflective conversations, and, how they described the process of being reflective through conversations.

6.2 Building Meaning and Improving Practice

Many mentor teachers appeared to understand the purpose of reflective talk as a means to assist their pre-service teachers develop the capacity to make sense of the

intricacy of teaching and student learning. Making meaning was the foundation for improving practice. In order to do this they spoke about reflecting first on their own teaching practice in order to make explicit what is usually left tacit.

6.2.1 Reflecting on Their Own Practice

Several mentor teachers stressed that the first step in accepting the mentor teacher role was to reflect on their own teaching practice. Carmel put this view succinctly "you need to be able to reflect on your own practice first I think." It was important to reflect so that the details of teaching practice, so easily left tacit, were brought to the fore. Reflecting on their teaching with a view to improvement was essential for being considered a 'good' teacher. Chloe provided an historical perspective "30 years ago you just delivered" while now "a good teacher has to question. …why am I doing that? Why am I doing it that way? … why did I do it like that instead of just doing it." She went on to claim, "If you're not willing to question your practice there's a barrier and you're always going to be right. … it's all to do with reflection, question everything." Chloe's comments emphasised an important component of being reflective: being a questioning teacher in order to make the tacit rationales behind teaching decisions explicit.

Some participants acknowledged that it was the yearly presence of a pre-service teacher that encouraged them to become reflective about their teaching. That is, their comments suggested they were encouraged to move from being "almost on auto pilot" (Martin) to becoming more intentionally reflective. For John "reflecting through teaching a PiTE student" moved 'reflection' from being an "airy fairy thing" to a realisation of "the power of reflection. … I'm learning a lot here." As Alan remarked, having a pre-service teacher "helps you gain confidence because you are

even more self-reflective than what you might be normally because you're telling someone why you're doing the things that you're doing." Ongoing talk that noted and analysed the detail in busy classrooms provided a foundation for co-creating meaning.

Others such as Barbara, Carmel, Chloe, Judy, John and Steve emphasised that the presence of their pre-service teacher encouraged them to question themselves and, in some cases, to problematise their practice. Carmel noted, "if you've got people observing then you need to make sure that you can reflect and say, did that work so well, do I need to change things?" The mentor teachers described "unpacking" their practice, becoming more "conscious", "mindful", "challenging themselves" and growing "through having to be really explicit" (Steve).

Several participants mentioned that being explicit about their teaching decisions was challenging, "one of the hardest things" (Martin). Kristina remarked, "It's an art in itself being able to verbalise … all the layers of what you do in the classroom." Judy captured the pressure of explaining to an observer:

> If someone is watching you or you're talking to somebody else about it, you actually have to have a really good understanding. You have to be able to explain it properly and you have to feel comfortable that you've shared it.

Having a really good understanding and explaining it "properly" was not straightforward. Steve explained having to verbalise:

> Just changes everything. … you actually have to go, well hang on a minute, why did I do it and you actually have to try and articulate it to someone else; that in itself challenges your own head and challenges you about the justification behind it and about what you're doing and why.

Moving from knowing their practice tacitly to being explicit was a challenging but rewarding thing to do. Chloe explained, “it can be really hard … just finding the right words to communicate to somebody else why you’re doing that … but having to explain to somebody else [gave a] deeper understanding of what I was doing.”

Verbalising or finding the right words was the first step to consciously communicating their teaching decisions to their pre-service teacher thus facilitating the learning of the other. For some mentor teachers the effort of verbalising, connecting through talk with their pre-service teacher informed their capacity to be intentional and understand their mentoring role as educative. However, not all mentor teachers worked on making their teaching decisions explicit. Jill, for instance, acknowledged that she had “probably not made it explicit enough … It probably needs to be.”

6.2.2 Helping the Pre-service Teachers Notice and Understand

Having developed their own capacity to be explicit, the data demonstrated that participants understood being reflective as a process through which they could develop their pre-service teacher’s capacity to see, think and talk about the classroom and student learning. Developing the capacity to talk about the detail of the classroom “layers” was critical for building coherence, making meaning and improving practice.

The data revealed that several mentor teachers noted that the classroom was an all too familiar place for their pre-service teacher. At the beginning of the school year there was much that the pre-service teachers took for granted. Patricia, for instance, described assisting the pre-service teachers to, “notice and understand” what was happening in the classroom “through the conversations you have with them.” Judy

explained why the reflective conversations with her pre-service teachers were so important:

> if you don't have that conversation, sometimes they don't know what to look for. … They just see the – possibly the big picture stuff. But it's that little picture stuff that you can really learn from. It might be even down to how to get kids from the floor to a desk.

Several mentor teachers used the metaphor 'layers' to describe the complexity of a classroom. For Kristina it was an "art in itself all the layers of what you do in a classroom." She noted that having a pre-service teacher meant, "un-teasing [sic] all the layers of teaching. …It's very intricate." Kristina went on to acknowledged that "it's not until you actually sit down with them and digest how it went, what did you do, what didn't go so well and why do you think that happened, that you actually get below the layers."

This analysis of the "layers" required specificity of language. Some mentor teachers, in particular Laura and Susan, spoke about how they encouraged their pre-service teachers to be more detailed with their reflective language when they were making sense of their past actions and experiences. Laura described pushing her pre-service teacher to be more specific in her reflections:

> There were times where she would say things like, 'oh that was terrible'. I suppose I was trying to help her say, well what part of that was terrible? Which part? … maybe getting her to be much more specific about what her reflection was for instance than just – it's easy for everyone to go oh, gosh, that class is terrible – Being specific about what she was looking for.

Susan also described how she pushed her pre-service teachers to move beyond vague and general comments to build meaning around complex educational ideas. She talked about wanting to hear pre-service teachers struggling with ideas (for instance 'differentiation') to get past superficial language, "When you're struggling with an idea quite often the wheels are turning whereas if you keep saying, 'it went really well' … what does that mean?"

Using specific language, being explicit and talking about the detail were seen as important ways to make sense of experience. Alan commented that when he listened to pre-service teachers' reflections he wanted to hear:

> a lot of thought, have they really been in the moment and thought about how it went, and how they felt, how it was for the kids; the learning, was the learning there as well. … 'it was alright' – and there's not really a depth to their conversation."

Martin commented on why going beyond "it was alright" was so important: "So if you're thinking about that, then it's more in the forefront of your head – and therefore you're thinking about it next time a situation arises." That is using language more precisely and attending to the detail helped build the layers, the structures or schema that facilitate future reflection or decision-making in the throes of teaching.

Occasionally, focused intervention was required to facilitate the pre-service teacher's ability to see what was being demonstrated and to reflect on the implications for improving their practice. Diane described how she arranged to sit with the pre-service teacher in a corner of the primary classroom:

> I just tuned the pre-service teacher into things like tell me about how he was able to get the class's attention. Or tell me about how he dealt with that student, when they were speaking, when he'd already asked that

> student not to speak … so what is the classroom teacher doing well? … Then later, when we were out of the classroom, revisiting that and saying …What could impact your practice by observing what this teacher has done?

Diane used the metaphor of 'tuning', refining the capacity to look through questioning, directing the pre-service teacher to describe and explain. Later she drew on these descriptions inviting a synthesis and analysis as she pushed the pre-service teacher's thinking to suggest implications for future practice.

6.2.3 Reflection as a Basis for Improving Practice

A key purpose behind encouraging pre-service teachers to be reflective was the gradual improvement of their professional practice. As Christine explained reflective talk should include considerations about "what you do differently next time." Hence, many mentor teachers noted that they would be looking to see that the focus for their reflective conversations had been responded to (Diane and Patricia) or "taken on board" (Adrienne, Chloe, Joe and Rita). Adrienne added that she would be "looking for evidence of improvement," while for Chloe the next day, " it didn't matter whether it didn't work again or whether it did. I said, 'it's the ability to sit down and reflect about why something hasn't worked.'" What Chloe, and other mentor teachers were looking for was a willingness to "have a go" and to analyse and make sense of their experiences with a view to continuing to improve.

Three mentor teachers (Martin, Miles and Kristina) talked about how their focus on reflection for improvement was guided by their use of the university's criteria that was based on the AITSL graduate standards. Kristina talked about setting weekly goals and supported an analysis of what went well, together with the next

phase of improvement. Martin was explicit that he was "looking for a change in practice" and the standards assisted him in assessing progress. He reported that he wanted to see whether they "were able to look at something and analyse it and go oh, okay, this worked because of this, or this didn't work because of that." Miles developed what he called a feedback template that connected with the university's criteria and this assisted with the specificity of the reflective analysis about the progress his pre-service teacher was making.

Some mentor teachers (Alan, Barbara, Claire, Harry, Katrina, Harry and Tess) wanted to see reflective conversations lead to improvements in planning that demonstrated a deeper understanding of the connection between understanding the curriculum and the selection of teaching strategies. However, most participants emphasised that they prioritised an improvement in student learning. The primary purpose for reflection was to enable the pre-service teachers to move their students' learning forward. This priority is the focus for the next section.

6.3 Reflecting on Student Progress

The data indicated that reflecting on the students, their backgrounds and their learning progress was a priority focus for the mentor teachers. This was the primary content for the reflective conversations with their pre-service teachers. Elizabeth explained:

> I'd want to see the observations covering all of the layers, so are they reflecting on their practice, are they reflecting on the students and their progress, and are they reflecting on the issues and the behaviours. I would want to see all of these three things being reflected upon.

Elizabeth's explanation also demonstrated how reflecting on teaching performance was not an end in itself but rather it was in the context of how it might influence student learning. Lisa expressed a similar view when she talked about pre-service teachers needing to "think past themselves" but went on to communicate her uncertainty about "how can you teach this?" Judy was explicit "what do the kids get out of it at the end? So that's the big question I think."

The data revealed that the mentor teachers considered reflection focused on the students in three main ways: firstly, the talk was about relationships and understanding the students' backgrounds with implications for decisions in the teaching moment. Secondly most of these mentor teachers pushed their pre-service teachers to examine their students' learning. Thirdly, as the year progressed, many mentor teachers encouraged their pre-service teachers to participate in assessment and reflective conversations about their role in students' progress.

6.3.1 Reflecting on Student Backgrounds

Much of the knowledge about student backgrounds was critical for in-the-moment decisions. The mentor teachers' focus was for pre-service teachers to learn how to respond to students' behaviour in ways that kept the focus on learning. Alan emphasised that "how we react to their behaviours" are choices made in the moment.

Many mentor teachers explained how their thinking about how to respond to challenging behaviour was constantly mining their accumulated knowledge of the students and their backgrounds. John explained, "that was a big emphasis … getting to understand the kids; to start asking questions of, they're presenting these behaviours but what are the causes – the historic stuff." John went on to describe how he helped his pre-service teachers unpack the various issues that might be at play in

any situation and emphasised he was aiming to keep the children focused on learning. For instance, if a child is late, you must think about their context, perhaps they have not had breakfast or have witnessed a family trauma, “They’ve got here to school and they’re five minutes late. They’ve done really well.”

Several participants, across all the levels of schooling (Adrienne, Charles, John, Laura, Lisa and Rita) commented that following reflective conversations about their students’ backgrounds they would be looking to see the pre-service teachers being proactive in initiating interactions with students. They wanted to see demonstrations of respect together with the use of the positive language and social skills that were a priority in these PiTE schools.

6.3.2 Reflecting on Student Learning

While talk about backgrounds was a priority for responding to behaviour, over the life of the program, more of the reflective talk turned to knowing students well in order to facilitate their learning. Chloe explained how her focus had shifted over the five years of the PiTE program: “Towards the end we were focusing a lot more on students and how they learn; not just what they learn; but it’s how they learn, and in understanding how students learn, how you adapt your teaching.”

Many mentor teachers were learning how to be “quite specific in certain things that are school-wide for us whether it’s school-wide language or we all have learning goals. … It’s the expectation for all of us” (Jackie). Consistency of language was a feature of each school. Clarifying learning intentions, being explicit, designing back from end of year outcomes, whole-small-whole planning; hooking students into learning; task design; assessing formatively; providing feedback to students and differentiating content and learning tasks were all part of a “whole school approach”

(Judy). Hence a feature of being reflective was introducing pre-service teachers to the discourse of the school community that supported being reflective about student learning.

This discourse communicated the increased accountability that was directing the reflective focus of mentor teachers more explicitly on to student learning. Chloe described what had been required in the past. “As long as you had a good activity and you kept them all under control and hopefully they learned something at the end of the lesson, then you were on track.” Now, however, greater clarity and purpose was required. Some participants commented that this was influenced by a wider sense of accountability, “we’re becoming more accountable” (Lucy), and “we’re getting a lot tighter” (Judy). Lucy explained that accountability pressures were “coming from above.” These were “expectations of us as professionals to step up and be accountable for the students’ learning and show evidence” (Lucy).

These expectations included state and national requirements of schools communicated through standards and national testing. Judy added the observation that teachers were no longer able to “blame” the children making excuses such as “in my class they’re not very good at this.” Now, Judy continued, teachers were being asked: “what can you do about it? How can you move these students? What are you going to do?” Both Lucy and Judy commented that their schools were becoming very different contexts for pre-service teachers’ school-based learning to teach than had existed just a few years earlier. Far greater responsibility for the students’ learning was required.

As Marcus put it “learning intentions and success criteria … I guess you’re trying to teach a pre-service teacher how to further student learning.” Kristina explained planning conversations enabled reflection on:

> Not just what activity are the children going to do? It is what learning outcomes do I want to achieve? It's how am I going to achieve those learning outcomes in a way that is multi-sensory and appropriate for this group of students.

Marcus communicated that being part of a learning community that had a "a heavy emphasis on expectations for learning from students" was effecting a "big cultural shift," with teachers "lifting our game," and the "biggest thing was … naming up learning intentions."

Nevertheless, participants found that typically, the pre-service teachers started with very "big picture plans" (Harry) for student learning. It was necessary to have reflective conversation that refined outcomes. The challenge for the pre-service teacher was to think with specificity about learning intentions in order to be able to reflect purposefully on how things had gone, what had been learned and what might need to be improved. Laura talked about helping her pre-service teacher to be clear about which student or what learning focus she might be targeting in a teaching sequence. Then she talked about connecting focused observations to the specific goals she had set:

> So it might have been a specific group that may not have been able to have one to one counting. … being specific about your observations so if your goal was we're going to work on one to one counting then that's what you were observing. … So being specific about what you're looking for.

Reflective conversations based on grappling with learning intentions provided a framework against which to consider both the students' and a pre-service teacher's learning progress. Several mentor teachers commented that specificity of learning

intentions enabled them to structure reflective conversations on whether "outcomes for the children were met or not" (Barbara) and to see that "there's learning happening" (Diane). Furthermore, Alan noted that a focus on learning intentions with his pre-service teachers improved their reflective conversations. He got them to "reflect back throughout the lesson … and then have a discussion at the end of the lesson as to how different it is. I love that conversation because then they go, 'wow, that really did focus what we were doing'."

6.3.3 Using Assessment Data for Reflection

Formulating learning intentions provided a foundation for monitoring children's understanding, and reflective conversations about evidence of progress. Some mentor teachers commented that they were learning to assess formatively. Joe explained, "we're currently in the process of looking at formative assessment … it's all about us getting a handle of where the student really is at." Susan commented that "what I like about formative assessment is that you're meeting the learner where they are at and you're taking them on individually," while Martin revealed, "I'm 10 years into my teaching career and I'm only just starting now to think that, oh, are my students learning what I think they're learning."

This school-wide focus on assessing formatively involved collecting data as evidence of student progress. As Elizabeth explained, working in a school that emphasised using data and a continuous focus on improving student learning outcomes, "made me very reflective and it made me understand that you need to take time to gather that data. … data is [sic] valuable but the way that I read it and interpret it really is the thing that matters." This emphasis on the importance of being a

reflective teacher and using data to support reflection explicitly informed the mentoring practice of some participants.

Several participants reported that working with student assessment data facilitated reflection by, "Really focusing on the data and the evidence … where do we go from here?" (John). Lucy commented on "instilling" in her pre-service teachers the need to focus reflective conversations on data. She was moving her pre-service teachers to move beyond thinking in terms of assessment as grades, "so trying to move them away from collecting the work at the end to tracking the children while they're doing the work and giving them feedback for where they're going next with their work." Miles connected assessing formatively with his pre-service teacher's reflections. "I tried to encourage her to … build in smaller assessment stages … more formative and get her to then build that into her feedback on her own reflection on how it's going." Kristina directed her pre-service teachers to think about "How are we going to know when our students are learning?" She talked to them about "capturing the moment" and how to "track learning over time to see how the children are moving."

Patricia and Alan talked about how they assisted their pre-service teachers to track the learning of individuals or small groups. This made the collection of evidence manageable for a novice. They then focused their reflective talk on the progress of particular students. Patricia described how she "talked a lot about how to help individual students or groups of students achieve … looking at work samples … we'd talk about forming groups based on need." Alan also used work samples and reflected with his pre-service teacher about student progress within the teaching context:

> Collecting up the work samples that we're doing … and looking and talking about it and going this group here have got it so let's give them

> a task that addresses their next need but this one here, let's pull them down, let's do some more focused teaching.

Alan called this process "almost like a moderation to discuss where to next" and communicated the sense he was working in a mutual and interconnected way with his pre-service teacher to analyse progress and make decisions about specific students.

These observations revealed the potential of the mentor teacher's dual role as a teacher of students as well as of their pre-service teacher. The dual role provided the opportunity to use reflective conversations to intentionally problematise their teaching. Miles commented that, "thinking about what am I really trying to get the kids to learn … that's what good mentoring would be, where you actually do use it as an opportunity to open up your own practice." Diane challenged her pre-service teachers' reflective thinking with questions about student progress by looking at student work and building the capacity to think pedagogically. "The Maths groups, … They've really got their heads around two dimensional shapes. Where do you think they need to go next? … Just all those conversations." Marcus described "being strategic… she could really tap into those couple of students, and we could have those conversations about how did that student go." He constantly invited thoughts about student learning and the implications for improving practice. Furthermore he indicated the mutuality of the relationship in the process:

> How did that student go with that task? What did they get out of it? What will we do next time? How will we make sure? What sort of formative assessment tools do we have in place to make sure that they're learning?

6.4 Providing Reflective Conversations

Reflection - the mediation of experience and the co-construction of meaning as a basis for the gradual improvement of practice - happened through ongoing reflective conversations. The data made clear that reflective conversations were a priority for these participants. Many mentor teachers indicated that their conversations with their pre-service teachers were “really, really important” (Judy). This was because “those constructive conversations just help you to reflect” (Martin). These reflective conversations were about many aspects of professional practice and were provided in a number of ways. As reported in the previous chapter some were in the context of planning. Other reflective conversations were based on the mentor teachers demonstrating an aspect of their teaching and reflecting on their thinking, either within the teaching moment or as soon as possible afterwards.

While there were many contexts for conversations between mentor teachers and their pre-service teachers, participants emphasised the importance of what they called feedback conversations. Feedback conversations were the context for reflecting on a teaching session taken by their pre-service teacher and considering improvements to teaching practice. As Judy expressed it, “there’s no point, if you don’t give them any feedback” and Jackie stated, “the more feedback the better”.

Feedback conversations required mentor teachers to be relational and intentional. Thus they highlight the interrelationship between the main themes of this thesis. Alan, for instance, commented that “in order to have that conversation you need to know that you’re not being judged and that the feedback is to help with improving your practice.” Many mentor teachers talked about how they took a developmental approach to providing feedback. Some used evidence to focus

conversations and most commented on how they had to think carefully about the way they questioned. Being honest with their feedback was important but emotionally challenging and some feedback conversations were very confronting, hence the need for a simultaneous focus on relationships.

6.4.1 Taking a Developmental Approach

The data suggested that the mentor teachers who took a developmental approach to providing feedback to their pre-service teacher had a sense of an intentional sequence for learning to teach. Claire observed that feedback has to be "tailored to their stage of development." This involved determining what the pre-service teachers knew and did not yet understand. Susan believed in starting by letting her pre-service teachers do "their own thing and then through feedback gradually move it. … I think they have to start off with where they're at and what they know and draw on what they've learnt." Many participants described starting with the 'basic stuff' and encouraging reflective feedback conversations about such things as where to stand in the room and handing out resources before you give instructions.

Some mentor teachers appeared to understand that providing examples of being reflective were important for the development of reflective practice in their pre-service teachers. Alan, for instance consciously modelled how important it was to reflect and consider how to improve, "maybe if I had have done this it would have been better. So I'm trying to instil that in all the pre-service teachers I have." He would intentionally allow the pre-service teachers to experience a teaching problem and then facilitate their reflection and learning: "I love the initial over-talk and then the discussion that goes with it." As confidence grew with the everyday routines of teaching Alan facilitated reflective conversations that moved to teaching and learning

decisions and used the inclusive ‘we’ to cast the process as a mutual one, “If the focus was on maths teaching, I would give her feedback as to was that scaffolded enough? Did we start at the right point or was it too advanced?”

Reflective feedback conversations that were viewed developmentally provided the opportunity to test readiness for new challenges. Elizabeth talked about planting seeds in her feedback conversations, “… next time have you thought about this or have you thought about that and just planting a few seeds with her that would make her reflect and go a bit further in her teaching.” Elizabeth encouraged risk taking, because “through those conversations you could tell she was ready to get out of her comfort zone and try something different.”

6.4.2 Using Evidence to Focus Reflection

The data suggested that many mentor teachers were grappling with how to go about feedback conversations. To avoid overwhelming their pre-service teacher, several participants collected evidence while observing their pre-service teacher and used this evidence as a basis for reflective talk. Alan wrote down what the pre-service teacher said, for instance when giving instructions. Chloe used sticky notes to capture in the moment observations of children as well as of the pre-service teacher. Adrienne used shorthand to capture speech issues and threats to the students that were not followed up. “If you do that one more time I’m going to send you out … this is what you said.” Jackie noted down aspects of her pre-service teacher’s lesson, “did you realise you stopped them four times?” Susan documented aspects such as “you were only giving attention to one student” while Judy asked, “did you notice that they were sitting there for 30 minutes and two children answered questions?”

Some mentor teachers observed that using evidence as a basis for reflective feedback conversations provided a means to manage and contain emotions. Judy observed that this was something she had learned to do while mentoring in the PiTE program, "In the past I probably wouldn't have done it quite like that. I would have sat there and getting frustrated that I was sitting and waiting." Learning to record a specific focus not only made the reflective conversations more intentional but also supported the relationship by assisting her to manage her own emotions that might inevitably leak into the feedback. Judy acknowledged that providing feedback is "very hard, because you can get wrapped up in the whole of what's happening in the lesson and give that touchy-feely stuff back." Focusing reflective feedback conversations on evidence meant she "had to go into more the specifics of what you were focusing on" and, Judy claimed this assisted her to be non-judgemental.

For Chloe, Judy and Diane, evidence was used as the focus for conversations that supported the pre-service teacher's reflective thinking about what they were doing and why and how they might think about improving. Chloe believed:

> it was more pertinent to the student teacher if it is something that they had done. … It was a real-life situation …I could say well this is what happened here. It wasn't just up there in a cloud – it was something they had done themselves.

Judy also noted the power of having data that "they really can't argue with what you've captured because it's there. It happened. Often they go 'Oh really? When did I do that? Did I just ask that one child all the questions?'" Diane also wanted her pre-service teachers to understand "this is what I saw" before asking: "So what do you want to see when you're giving those instructions? What do you want to hear?"

Some mentor teachers reported that they gradually negotiated with their pre-service teacher about what evidence would provide the focus for reflective conversations. For instance Carmel and Rita described a collaborative approach to collecting evidence. For Rita "it was about pinpointing something specific that they wanted to focus on … what they were feeling that they needed to work on." Rita collected the negotiated data and "we'd come back and have a reflective conversation and look at the data and we'd build from there." Carmel had her adult learner in mind when she negotiated a manageable focus for her observation of her pre-service teacher and took notes on what they decided together:

> We'd focus, … if I was watching her teach a lesson and we might have talked about, today, what do you think you'd like to improve on today, … and she might have said …'my questioning, I'd like to know about my questioning'. We'd just talk about the questioning, or I'd just take notes on just the questioning. I'd try to keep it small and narrow.

This negotiation and collaboration around focus and the collection of evidence demonstrated respect for the pre-service teacher as a learner and built mutuality and trust in the relationship.

6.4.3 Taking a Questioning Stance

Moving from telling to questioning, in their approach to providing feedback, was a balancing act for many mentor teachers. Lucy talked about the challenges of working with adults and highlighted the significance of relationships. "How do you teach them without telling them. It's a really delicate balance. It is about relationships and modelling and them respecting you as a teacher first." Chloe described the transition she made over the five years of the PiTE program when she talked about

how she moved from feedback as telling to feedback as questioning, noting that "having done that cognitive coaching helped me". To start with she described asking "probably more on the surface type questioning about why they thought things went well or didn't." Cognitive Coaching (Costa & Garmston, 2002) professional learning provided conversational structures and assisted Chloe to ask questions that "could uncover more layers." The benefit, she noted, was "they've come to it themselves whereas before I probably would have told them".

A number of mentor teachers commented on the importance of having good questioning skills and that this was an area of their mentoring practice that they were conscious of refining and improving. Carmel believed that a mentor teacher needed "good questioning skills" to facilitate her pre-service teacher's reflective thinking. Following an observation of her pre-service teacher Carmel would ask, "why did you do this here, and what impact did that have?" She was conscious that vague language did not build meaning and she noted that it was important to invite analysis:

> If someone straightaway says to you that was a really good job – you're like, 'what ever'. But if they make you think about why it was a good job or why it wasn't a good job, and how it might have been different, then it sticks in.

Barbara, Laura and Marcus reported that they worked hard at resisting the urge to "give her the answers" (Barbara). Instead they prioritised questions and pushed for specificity. Marcus explained the importance of:

> just those probing questions to really unpack what she knew, what she observed, what she noticed in that particular lesson or that particular planning or when she talks about our small group. How did you go?

> What did you do when [the student] got stuck? What sort of questions did you ask him?

What stood out from the data was the number of mentor teachers who were thinking relationally about how to question as a basis for their reflective feedback conversations. Marcus explained he learned to "hang back" and "let her speak and you just come up with the right question at the right time. You don't always get it right. … You almost have to bite your tongue sometimes!" Biting your tongue and not giving answers was important because, as Stephanie observed:

> Some of them say 'I'm not quite sure' and then there's just that prompting and we get to it. I generally don't really tell them the answer unless they're really struggling. I just keep asking more questions. I think that they really have to think about what's happening.

Deliberately asking questions and having them "really think" focused attention on building the meaning about what was "happening". The pre-service teachers were invited to elaborate and be specific. In this way classroom teaching experience was mediated.

6.4.4 Having Hard Reflective Conversations

Being honest, maintaining trust and providing timely reflective feedback was a balancing act for participants and something they did not necessarily feel skilled in doing. Judy acknowledged, "we all want to hear positive feedback" and providing critique was challenging. Laura, for instance, reported how she had to challenge her pre-service teacher's interpretation and insist on improvement:

> Sometimes those conversations are hard, especially if you say to someone I want you to do this. Basically this is the job that you're in at

the moment and this is what you need to be doing. She'd sort of say, 'well I think I am doing it'. Well, no you're not doing it.

This is difficult relational negotiation and responsibility that pushed for the appropriate professional standards.

Nevertheless, mentor teachers needed to consider how to have these conversations in ways that did not threaten the relationship. One temptation was to be overly positive. Carmel, for instance, expressed concern that in her attempts at being diplomatic with her feedback, "I try to be very positive, and I don't know if I overplay the positive…. You did a really great job, but there were six kids under the table."

The importance of maintaining confidence for the pre-service teacher was at the forefront of many mentor teachers' minds. Several mentor teachers described how they provided feedback in a pattern or formula of positive-negative-positive comments or what Jackie described as "a crap sandwich". For Jackie feedback needed to be fair and she demonstrated relational thoughtfulness about her pre-service teacher as a learner. "They're not going to know so I think sometimes we tend to be a little bit harsh and 'you didn't do this' and they'll say, 'was I supposed to?'" Jackie noted the importance of "finding that balance of this worked really well and the crap sandwich. So this was good, this was not good but this was really good. Just keep that confidence up."

Diane talked about being "sensitive to how you approached that," when reflective conversations were used to provide honest feedback. She emphasised the importance of taking responsibility for the relationship by consciously managing the tone and language used to address the concern:

I just think I need to find a way of conveying that matter-of-factly and diplomatically, but just be honest. You might say look; when you sent

> the children off to get their recess, it was a shambles. I've an underlying friendly sort of nature, I just say it how it is really. But not in a nasty way.

Managing the relationship through the use of language was vital to prevent defensive barriers emerging that might limit reflection and improvement on the part of the pre-service teacher.

In the interviews some participants talked about retreating from the challenge of reflective conversations that addressed concerns. For Christine the challenge was "out of my comfort zone, definitely … Because you're pointing out social problems that you're seeing, and that that person may not be realizing that they're actually having." Other mentor teachers described the pull to avoid these conversations. Laura confessed that she was "not very good at that. It's something that you try and avoid. … you fiddle around on the outside edge rather than being quite specific about it." Susan agreed, "I've always found it awkward to communicate failure. … really difficult … They need to know at some point where they're at." Tess, as the lead mentor in her school, supported other mentor teachers and commented that some did not want to offend their pre-service teacher. In response she clarified the mentor teacher's purpose around providing care and support, "well I'm not asking you to offend them but I'm asking you to help their learning and if you feel that this would help that learning then that's a conversation you need to have." For Tess, caring also involved concern for the pre-service teacher's learning to teach. However relational challenges and an absence of agency appeared, at times, to prevent appropriate intervention that could facilitate reflection that leads to the improvement of practice.

At the heart of these relational challenges were the emotions involved. Alan Judy and Laura all acknowledged this and talked about being anxious about

communicating a sense of failure. Alan commented on how he would position himself as a learner about teaching in order to ameliorate the situation and encourage reflection:

> When it got into actual teaching and if things didn't go right and they took it personally and went I'm a bad teacher; no look, that's teaching, I have bad lessons. … But reflecting on it and then changing the way you do it next time is how you grow.

Like Alan, Judy emphasised that teaching is something she was still learning to do well and used inclusive language that communicated reflective conversations that focused on shared problem solving, "We're all learners … doesn't matter if you make mistakes. But let's talk it through and let's work out how we can improve next time."

Marcus described these hard conversations as "risk management." The risk that needed to be intentionally managed was to a relationship that continued to support a learner teacher. It helped to direct attention away from 'performance' and towards specific students and their learning. For Marcus:

> If you think something isn't up to scratch, you have to have that conversation and say, not sure with that, and there might be times when you're not quite sure but let them run with it to see how it will go and get their feedback on it, and there's times when you have to step in, too, and have a bit of a hard conversation. … But you're going to have a carefully constructed conversation that might not necessarily sound like criticism, but it's just giving them some feedback about it, and trying to take it further. Have you thought about what you might do for that particular student?

In order to have these 'difficult' reflective conversations throughout the year, the nature of the relationship had to be continually and intentionally addressed. Responsibility for the relationship was required. Some participants commented that this was one aspect of mentoring pre-service teachers where they would seek professional learning. Stephanie for instance, wanted her future learning to be "around how you talk to people about challenging things. It's okay to talk to someone when things are going well, but how do you have those difficult conversations when they're not going so well?"

6.4.5 Reflection as Self-directed Learning

The data demonstrated that the mentor teachers used reflective conversations as a vehicle to encourage the self-directed learning of their pre-service teachers. They enabled this transition in a number of ways. Several mentor teachers described being on a learning to teach journey, "whether it's your first year or your tenth year or you're nearly retired there are still areas that we can all improve" (Diane). This attitude communicated the mutuality that endorsed the pre-service teacher as learning with their mentor teacher. As Tess observed, "I think the conversations where it didn't work or we could have done something differently were probably the more valuable."

Self-deprecating talk about mistakes made by the mentor teachers prepared a context in which their pre-service teachers could talk about what was not working for them but also built confidence in reflecting on their own progress. Laura demonstrated how, over time, reflective conversations enabled the analysis of what had gone well together with the pre-service teacher's capacity to note where improvements needed to be made:

> Tell me two things that you thought were great and one thing you can improve. So we really tried to nut some of those conversations out. Then she started to come back and say things like, I was really good at doing this. I presented this really well, I did that maths activity really well but the independent group task was too easy.

The data indicated that many participants talked about encouraging their pre-service teachers to be the ones asking the questions. Adrienne, for instance, remarked that they should not "be frightened to ask. Don't think you're expected to know everything. You're not going to learn unless you ask questions. … Question what I'm doing and why I did it. All the time." Chloe understood the importance of encouraging a questioning culture because, "If you come to something yourself then it's going to mean so much more than if somebody else tells you". Barbara explained that, "I wanted her to do the thinking herself. … If I just point out to her all the things that she could have improved on then she's not doing the thinking herself." Lucy wanted the questions to have a future focus on improving practice. "The questions had to be more than how did you think I went? It had to be about where do we go from here?" Marcus demonstrated a responsibility for the relationship when he observed:

> Sometimes a lot of the answers are already there. … there'll be times when she would have asked for specific support. … I guess it was important for me to gauge sort of where she was at and see what she had tried. It wasn't always me coming up with answers or solutions."

A number of mentor teachers explained that as the year progressed, and trust in the relationship deepened, they would increasingly ensure that it was their pre-service teacher who took control of learning to teach. Participants encouraged the pre-

service teachers to drive the reflective conversations and insisted that the focus was on the students' learning. Steve explained:

> Always tried to make it driven by them, so what did you see, what did you do? We always tried to make the focus as well on what did the kids get out of it? … how are you going to move forward. … What are you going to try next time?

Other participants talked about building the capacity of their pre-service teachers to assess their own teaching with an orientation to continuous improvement. Tess talked about "letting go the reins," while Martin expressed it this way:

> I guess the hardest thing about giving feedback is to remember that they're not you. …. You're trying to shape them as a teacher without shaping them. You're trying to help them shape themselves. Give them options – figure out their own way.

These mentor teachers talked about encouraging the pre-service teachers to think for themselves and not just copy what they observed. They were not aiming to clone themselves. Jackie put it succinctly – "they don't have to be me."

Reflecting on how strategies feel and work, and helping the pre-service teachers set their own goals encouraged them to own the learning. "Very much like a learner in the classroom, that metacognition and the reflection on their own learning is really, really important because that's when the learning is deepest" (Kristina).

6.4.6 Finding Time for Reflective Conversations

The chapter *Being Relational* commented on the need for mentor teachers to be patient with the time these conversations took in busy school days. They appeared to understand that making time for reflective conversations was an essential aspect of

the role. This section examines the ways participants found the time for reflective conversations.

Some were able to prioritise immediacy others scheduled time within the day or week. Kristina prioritised talking immediately after a session in her kinder classroom:

> I always talk to the student, try to do it on the spot. This also goes for when they're actually taking the class. … even if it's two minutes while the students are in a transitional stage to getting lunch boxes … have a quick chat because it's fresh in their head. … What did you see, how did you think it went, what skills would I have had to take that lesson.

Steve in his secondary school classroom also stressed the importance of immediacy: "I probably spent more time having informal chats while I was teaching and things like that directly about things rather than sitting down having formal structured conversations. … It's got to be almost straight after it happened, just so that they can put it into a context."

Several mentor teachers stressed the importance of finding time for their reflective conversations while the details were fresh in their memories, particularly when the focus needed to be on student learning. Barbara noted the "trickiness" of finding time after school and the need to sometimes grab moments when they presented themselves because you needed to focus on the students and their learning:

> Because often your day is finished, run off to a staff meeting. Sometimes you have two days that weren't staff meeting days. But even if we did it on the run while we were out on duty I think it was really important to after the lesson have a debrief opportunity and what did you think about those kids while it's still fresh in your mind.

Fitting in conversations with pre-service teachers after school and around staff meetings made for long days. Laura explained the commitment and the pressures:

> sometimes we were there till half past five, talking. Then you think, oh gosh, now we've got to organise for tomorrow … having that time for the conversation was tricky. You try to fit it in because there was a lot to talk about and not lots of time to do it.

Barbara and Laura, communicated the physical, emotional and cognitive effort involved in prioritising time for the talk that makes sense of what has happened "while it's still fresh in your mind."

While finding time during the day was "tricky" many mentor teachers expressed their appreciation in being able to have reflective conversations over a year. They appreciated building meaning gradually through their talk with their pre-service teacher. Miles noted the potential of the many informal conversations over a year and the capacity to talk about student growth over time, "walking from one building to another. Or just over a cup of tea." Having more time provided the opportunity for establishing relationships that were the foundation for challenging conversations. "They can build a relationship with you so you can have a much more frank discussion about stuff" (Katrina).

Developing the relationship over time also enabled a purposeful continuity between reflective conversations over the year. This supported some mentor teachers in consciously understanding the pedagogical role of reflective conversations and to consider themselves as teachers of teaching. Kristina was a prime example of this, "Then that becomes your teaching point at your next discussion. When we're listening to a student read what sorts of skills do we need to bring, what do you know about reading?"

Claire, a lead mentor teacher in her secondary school, is another example of a mentor teacher reporting using reflective conversations pedagogically. She scheduled regular meetings over the year with her group of pre-service teachers. Claire talked about:

> knitting everything together. … So my aim in those meetings was around knitting together what they'd done at uni with what they were doing at our school, then what they'd done all the way through the lead-up to this point and where we wanted them to go. … it sort of evolved into that knitting and learning together of how we can unpack and then reflect and learn and build and really examine our practice together.

This was one of the very few examples of a mentor teacher intentionally reflecting on the learning in the school and connecting it with the course work at the university.

6.5 Synthesis and Summary

All the mentor teachers reported on the importance of reflection in their mentoring role. Some observations were fleeting or without detail, simply a mention of the need to be reflective, or to "unpack" or "debrief" classroom experiences. The data revealed that for other mentor teachers, reflective conversations that mediated and co-created meaning around student learning and teaching, were given careful and elaborated attention.

Many mentor teachers made clear that in order to reflect with specificity and detail about the layers of the classroom they had to make the effort to verbalise and become articulate about their own teaching. Making the tacit explicit was revealed as hard work. However this effort was essential for supporting pre-service teachers in noticing and understanding what they were observing and experiencing. On this basis

mentor teachers enabled reflective conversations that facilitated the gradual improvement of teaching practice.

Many of these reflective conversations gave priority and emphasis to conversations about student learning. Knowing students well in order to move their learning forward involved using assessment data as evidence of learning to focus reflective conversations on progress. Where mentor teachers had this as a priority they demonstrated the potential of their dual focus on both student and pre-service teacher learning. In this way being reflective involved both mediating the classroom experience and taking action towards improvement. Furthermore, in this way some mentor teachers facilitated the novice's shift from thinking primarily about their own teaching performance to considering the learners' perspectives and their impact on learning outcomes.

The accountability discourse in these school communities influenced this emphasis on reflection focused on student learning. Taking an inquiring, questioning reflective stance based on an analysis of evidence of student learning was a developing feature of these PiTE schools. This cultural shift in turn underlined the importance of making time for refection, and, in busy schools, this was "tricky". Nevertheless, placement in a school over a calendar year supported a gradual approach to developing the pre-service teacher as a reflective thinking teacher and enabled the mentor teachers to build mutuality within cycles of negotiated experience and reflective feedback talk about specific observations.

In the one-to-one context of reflective feedback conversations relational considerations were highlighted. Some mentor teachers observed that being "face-to-face" was extremely challenging and there was a temptation to overstate the positive and retreat from anything negative. These reflective feedback conversations were

often emotionally confronting. Taking a developmental approach, using evidence, conversation structures and enhancing questioning skills were all strategies for enabling the responsibility mentor teachers felt to be honest with their feedback. Finally, over the year delegating responsibility to the pre-service teacher to "drive" the conversations enabled the novice to take increasing responsibility over their learning-to-teach journey.

While only one mentor teacher (Harry) used the term 'critical reflection', where he was implying the need for teachers to be self-critical, there were threads in the data that communicated the sense that many mentor teachers were critically reflective. For instance, many mentor teachers reported reflective talk that advocated for the students in their high ENI schools. They emphasised their pre-service teachers demonstrate respect, empathy and "move student learning forward." They acknowledged the political dimensions of growing accountability and requirements "from above". Their reflections on their mentoring practice included an ethical and moral dimension that emerged through the strong sense from all participants that they were concerned to do a good job for the profession.

The following chapter will discuss the implications from the three findings chapters. It will synthesise and analyse the key insights gathered from listening to the voices of these mentor teachers.

Chapter 7

Discussion

7.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters analysed the data guided by the broad research question: *How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?* The general answer to the research question was that the mentor teachers understood teaching pre-service teachers to teach as being relational, intentional and reflective. However, within each of the themes mentor teachers revealed varying understandings of their role.

This chapter will propose *relational responsibility* as a core organising idea or conceptual lens that will frame an understanding of these variations in mentor teacher interpretations. As a conceptual lens relational responsibility provides the means to weave together the three themes outlined in the Findings chapters. It enables a nuanced insight into the variations and shades of meaning that lie within each theme. Furthermore as a concept, 'relational responsibility' informs how becoming a teacher of teaching can be enhanced and supported in the future. This chapter will outline how the concept relational responsibility emerged as threads through the data, is informed by the scholarly literature, and, is deepened by the findings of this thesis.

The extant literature reviewed in Chapter 2 indicated that while some researchers are optimistic and aspirational about the possibilities for the mentor teachers' role, others argued the role continues to be problematic in how it is perceived by many teachers. Scholars noted how teachers defaulted to keeping order (Feiman-Nemser, 2012; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985) and routinized behaviours (Ellis, 2010; Wang & Odell, 2002); provided tips and advice (van Velzen et al., 2012); were guided by an ethic of politeness (Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011); and, demonstrated an inability to theorize pedagogically (Ellis, 2010). Thus the literature demonstrated that while there are important insights for improving the mentoring of per-service teachers there are also enormous challenges.

This scholarly literature provides the conceptual frame that informs the findings of this thesis but also indicates important gaps in our present understanding of the mentor teacher role. For instance, the mentor teachers' voice, their understandings about teaching pre-service teachers to teach, was noted in Chapter 2 as largely under-valued, and hence under-researched in the scholarly literature. In seeing how this voice can advance our understanding of the notion of relational responsibility in the field of initial teacher education, this chapter will demonstrate the value of the "emic" or insider perspective for understanding what the mentor teacher role entails.

The interrelationships between the themes, being relational, being intentional and being reflective are represented diagrammatically (Figure 7.1: *Becoming a Teacher of Teaching*). This diagram provides a structure that guides the discussion in this chapter.

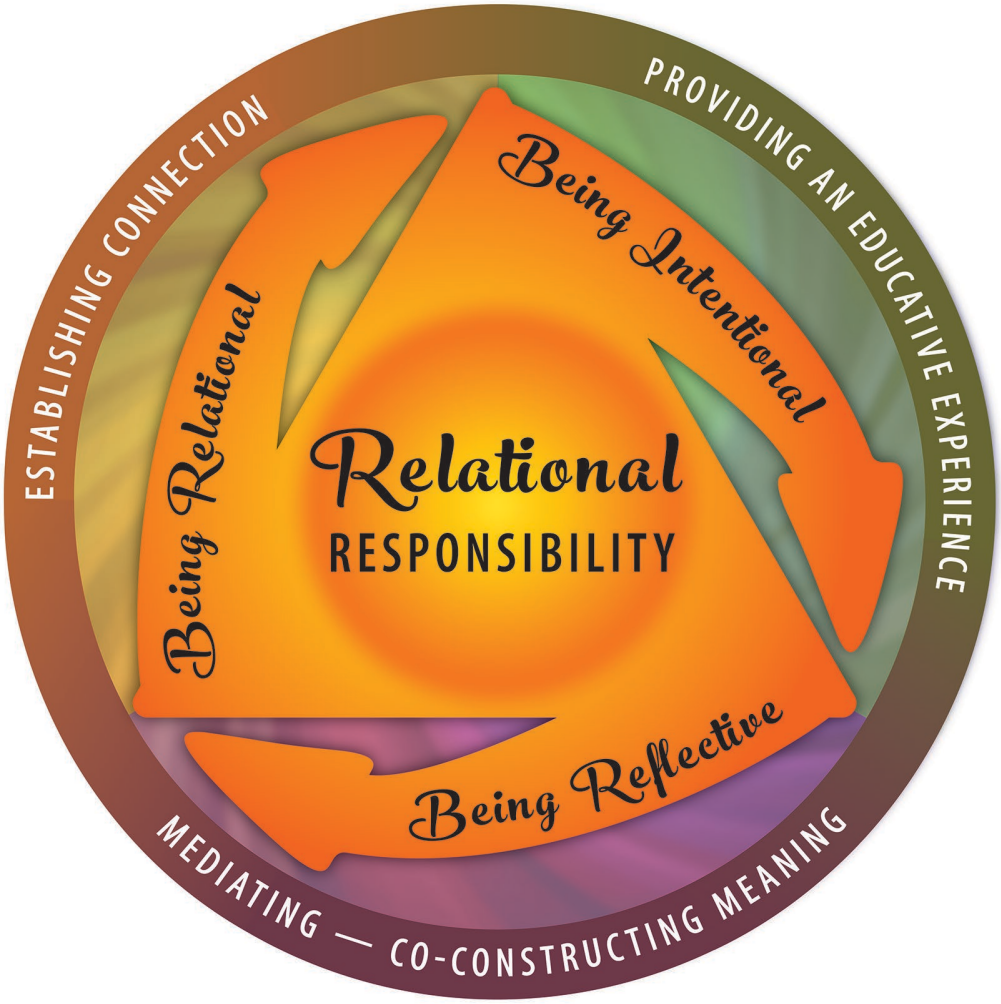


Figure 7.1 Becoming a Teacher of Teaching

7.2 Becoming a Teacher of Teaching

Figure 7.1, *Becoming a Teacher of Teaching,* illustrates the interrelationship between each of the main themes of the findings chapters and the essence of each. For being relational, the essence was around the extent to which mentor teachers established connection and a mutual learning relationship with their pre-service teachers. For being intentional, the essence was the extent to which these participants understood experience as educative and thought pedagogically about the experiences they were providing. For being reflective, the essence was the extent to which these

participants understood their reflective conversations with their pre-service teachers as a process for mediating or co-creating meaning in order to support their pre-service teachers' gradual improvement of their professional practice. Each thematic essence summarises what can be achieved when a mentor teacher takes responsibility for the relationship and becomes a teacher of teaching. The findings revealed mentor teachers were at different stages towards what is diagrammatically illustrated as the essence of each theme.

Figure 7.1 attempts to capture diagrammatically what is a dynamic and interwoven set of relational processes. As indicated in the Findings, three themes are shown as interconnected through what is labelled relational responsibility. While each theme is illustrated as a separate colour and side of a triangle they are interconnected through the merging of the colours and the arrows that move out and around from the central concept of relational responsibility. Figure 7.1 places relational responsibility at the centre of what it means to become a teacher of teaching. That is, conscious and intentional effort at taking relational responsibility, or placing care for the relationship as the primary concern, is crucial to the mentoring role.

Taking relational responsibility enabled some mentor teachers to build mutuality as learners, intentionally sequence learning to teach and have reflective conversations that facilitated their pre-service teachers' capacity to focus on students' learning with gradual confidence and proficiency. In order to do this they needed to co-construct meaning with their pre-service teachers and together make sense of what it means to teach and what it means for their students to learn.

This illustrative figure will be used to guide a more detailed answer to the research question: *How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?* The following section explains how the core concept

relational responsibility emerged through the data, as outlined in the Findings chapters, and was subsequently informed by the scholarly literature.

7.3 Relational Responsibility

The use of relational responsibility as a core organising idea or conceptual lens emerged through a close examination of the data. In the first instance the idea that 'responsibility' might be an important concept was suggested through examining the variations in how mentor teachers talked about being intentional in their mentoring role. Over half the mentor teachers communicated that they had a sense of responsibility for their pre-service teacher's learning to teach. In part this was communicated through the specific use of the terms responsible or responsibility through comments such as, "I have a responsibility to that [pre-service teacher]" (Adrienne) and "it's a huge responsibility taking on a pre-service teacher" (Susan). Other mentor teachers used synonymous terms such as "commitment" and "feeling accountable." Furthermore, while not specifically using the term responsibility, many mentor teachers communicated a sense of responsibility through their reports that addressed being intentional. Some were particularly intentional when they considered planning for teaching, modelling and demonstrating, scaffolding practice, assessing progress and making time for reflective conversations. In this way many demonstrated responsibility as agency in their mentoring role.

Throughout the Findings chapters this emerging sense of responsibility involved a very strong relational dimension. Indeed all the mentor teachers were explicit about the critical importance of relationships. Hence, responsibility appeared to be primarily embedded in the relationship with their pre-service teacher. Some mentor teachers communicated the ethical connotations for responsibility when they

talked about “caring”, “perseverance” and having a “moral purpose.” What emerged from the data was the idea that responsibility was primarily to the relationship.

However, the Findings chapters also reported variations in the extent to which the mentor teachers took responsibility for the relationship with their pre-service teacher. For some, language choices revealed attitudes and beliefs that formed subtle barriers to the achievement of relational responsibility. This variation highlighted that although taking responsibility for the relationship was seen to be core to the process of becoming a teacher of teaching it could not be taken for granted. These observations will be discussed in more detail further in this chapter.

The scholarly literature expands the notion of relational responsibility that frames this discussion of becoming a teacher of teaching and gives richness to what has been revealed in the data. This literature is part of a large body of scholarly writing that explores the tension existing, particularly in the western world, between the sense we have of being autonomous individuals and the sense of being fundamentally interconnected and responsible for each other. The concept relational responsibility is informed by the work of scholars who emphasise the interconnectedness between self and other. They are philosophers such as Buber (1970), Noddings (1986), Taylor (1989), and Levinas (1991), the psychologists Vygotsky (1978) and Gergen (2009); and educational researchers such as Hawkey (1997), Edwards (2010, 2015b; Edwards & D'arcy, 2004), Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006); and, from the research of mentoring in corporations, Fletcher and Ragins (2007). The thread that connects these scholars is the emphasis on the fundamental connection we feel for other human beings and the ethical dimensions of our responsibility for the other.

This connection we feel for other human beings and the conscious intentional effort of attending to relationships in professional contexts is, as was noted in Chapter 2, increasingly the focus of scholarly attention. Some scholars refer to the term presence (Noddings, 1986; Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006), some use the term relational agency (Edwards, 2010, 2015b; Edwards & D'arcy, 2004; Hawkey, 1997), while others describe relational competence (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007). It is Gergen (Gergen, 2009, 2011, 2015; McNamee & Gergen, 1999b) - and scholars working with him in psychological studies and related fields such as education (Anderson, 1999; McNamee & Gergen, 1999a; Shotter, 2012) - who have proposed the concept relational responsibility.

I have chosen Gergen's concept relational responsibility as core to becoming a teacher of teaching (as illustrated by Figure 7.1) because Gergen's work speaks to the complex subtleties given to this notion through the Findings chapters. Mentoring pre-service teachers is an area where the concept relational responsibility has not yet been applied. The Findings, embedded as they are in the specific context of mentoring pre-service teachers, enable additional situated and significant insights that develop and extend this important concept.

Gergen (2009) argues that our sense of relationship with the other is at the heart of our language, identity and meaning making as human beings. He explains:

> To be responsible to relationship is, above all, to sustain the process of co-creating meaning. In relational responsibility we avoid the narcissism implicit in ethical calls for "care of the self". We also avoid the self/other split resulting from the imperative to "care for the other". In being responsible for relationships we step outside the individualist tradition; care for the relationship becomes primary (p. 364).

Gergen's explanation communicates the importance of mutual meaning making through participation in coordinated action by being "immersed in a confluence of relating" (2009, p. 304) or, what he also calls "a choreography of co-action" (2009, p. 137). These ideas speak to the mentor-pre-service teacher relationship and the suggestion of a 'dance' captures their moves of both distance and connection as detailed in the continuum revealed in the Findings chapters.

It is the centrality of the co-creation of meaning through care for the relationship, or responsibility to the relationship, that has clear relevance to the threads emerging from the interview data. Importantly 'responsibility' carries with it the ethical connotations communicated through the data that the terms 'agency' (Edwards, 2010, 2015b; Edwards & D'arcy, 2004; Hawkey, 1997) and 'competence' (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007) do not. Crucially too, in Gergen's work, is the sense of the relational effort that is involved because "to be responsible to relationships is to devote attention and effort to the means of sustaining the potential for co-creating meaning" (Gergen, 2011, p. 218). Gergen's argument (Gergen, 2009, 2011, 2015; McNamee & Gergen, 1999b) for a relational ontology provides a number of ideas that further develop the concept and speak to the importance of the Findings reported in the previous three chapters.

For instance, Gergen talks about a number of elements that together make care for the relationship primary, sustain the process of co-creating meaning and inform the data. These include resisting the temptation to apportion blame; demonstrating an appreciation for the other; consciously crafting a partnership and interdependence with conjoint achievement in mind; acknowledging emotions as relational performances; discourse shaped by the use of 'we'; a continuous engagement in the

process of inquiry and generating meaning; and, a conscious attention to both verbal and non-verbal language through the meaning making process.

Grounded in the mentor teacher voice the concept of relational responsibility provides an interpretative frame for answering the research question: *How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?* Furthermore, exploring the lived experience of the PiTE mentor teachers provides an opportunity to draw out the nuances the data can give to this important term and provide new insights into the mentor teacher role.

The concept relational responsibility informs an understanding of how being relational, intentional and reflective are complexly intertwined when mentor teachers understand themselves as teachers of teaching. The following section examines how the concept assists in understanding how the mentor teachers understood their role as prioritising relationships.

7.4 Prioritising Relationships

Relational responsibility is embedded most obviously through the priority all participants placed on relationships as fundamental to both teaching and mentoring. As Tess put it "relationships … drive everything in a school." The mentoring relationship was enmeshed within the daily challenges of relationships with children, many from disadvantaged backgrounds, and the growing collegiality and teamwork required in these PiTE schools. The mentor teachers demonstrated that "teaching is a relation with others" (Britzman, Dippo, Searle, & Pitt, 1997, p. 22) and the essence of being relational, as illustrated in Figure 7.1, was establishing connection and a mutual learning relationship with their pre-service teacher.

The mentor teachers typically described their relationship with their pre-service teacher as "the most important thing." This data endorsed the extant literature where scholars have evaluated this relationship and the social interactions involved as central (Ambrosetti, 2014), essential (Hoffman et al., 2015) and crucial (Kriewaldt, Nash, et al., 2018). Orland-Barak and Hasin (2010) maintain that "interpersonal relationships based on trust, collaboration, caring, support and mutual recognition are also considered core to the work of the mentor" (p. 429). Yendol-Hoppey (2007) connects this relationship with learning when she notes that the relationship between mentor and novice is "an essential building block for learning" (p. 691).

While the extant literature endorses the critical place of the relationship in mentoring, the continuum described in Chapter 4 *Being Relational* revealed that something more was required of the relationship for the achievement of mutual learning and co-action. This is best understood by the concept relational responsibility. Listening to the voices of the 30 mentor teachers provides insights into what was required for taking relational responsibility and, importantly, what appeared to be the barriers. Prioritising relationships in the first instance involved providing care and support. What 'caring' means is examined in the following section.

7.4.1 Being Caring and Supportive

The mentor teachers understood their role as a caring one and prioritised their relationship as one that provided care and support. Susan defined this well as having "a nurturing kind of sense." In Chapter 4, *Being Relational*, it was recorded that Alan, Barbara, Charles and Katrina understood the mentor teacher role by positioning themselves very differently to how they themselves had been treated when they were pre-service teachers. Charles and Katrina, for instance, talked about being left to "sink

or swim". What they experienced could be described as "benign neglect" (Valencia et al., 2009). By contrast, all participants emphasised the importance of being caring and providing emotional support, reassuring their pre-service teachers "it's not a judgement thing" (Alan).

However, an emphasis on emotional support in the mentoring relationship has been criticised in the scholarly literature. There is concern that the nurturing role dominates (Bullough, 2005; Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011; Hennissen et al., 2011). Bullough (2005), for instance, argues "a community of compassion is a retreat from the world" (p. 12). Indeed, Adrienne's comment that she was "there to help them" and her role was "not there to be critical," communicated a subtle sense of ambivalence to the possible need for evaluative observations.

Furthermore, some scholars (Hennissen et al., 2011) treat relationships as a separate area of mentoring, or what Orland-Barak (2014, p. 180) calls the 'matriarchal' and 'patriarchal' functions of mentoring: the area of emotional support, trust, care and empathy separate from task assistance, and helping the pre-service teachers refine their teaching skills. The critique of scholars (e.g. Hobson et al., 2009; Valencia et al., 2009) suggests that much research, while finding emotional support necessary, also observes that it is not sufficient when a novice's learning to teach is the intended outcome.

Nevertheless, when Susan defined 'caring' as having a nurturing sense, she explained that this included noticing and picking-up on whether or not a pre-service teacher was anxious or uncomfortable about something. She appeared to be talking about empathy, a quality that some scholars (for instance Boyatzis, 2007; Daloz, 1986 in the general mentoring literature) describe as a critical quality for mentors because the role requires expertise in "recognising and responding to the standpoints of

others" (Edwards, 2010, p. 2). For Edwards (2015b), such expertise involves "commitment, responsibility, strong judgements, self-evaluation, connection to the common good and attention to what people do" (p. 779).

Thus it appears important to consider a more nuanced understanding of what it means to 'care' in the context of mentoring pre-service teachers. When relationships are viewed as an "essential feature of learning" (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 266) the central importance of relationships, including the importance of providing emotional support for pre-service teachers, must be recognised. The data revealed that learning to teach was a social process (Britzman, 1991) that involved negotiating interpretations and the meaning of classroom activities and decisions. Providing care and support within this one-on-one relationship appeared foundational for these negotiations because as the findings revealed meaning making could be messy, tentative and often ambiguous. It could also be fraught by irritation, fatigue and stress. It was not a technical rule driven exercise that was neat and linear.

Hence, a more nuanced understanding of what caring means in the mentoring context enhances our understanding about what is involved with this aspect of prioritising relationships. Informed by Noddings' (1986) work on the ethics of care and her conception of caring encounters in teaching children, we are invited to interpret the concept 'caring' as communicating more than providing emotional support. Noddings goes further than the description of a caring attribute. She emphasises the moral dimensions of caring (Goldstein, 1999). Noddings (1986) argues:

> When we behave ethically as one's-caring, we are not obeying moral principles – although, certainly, they may guide our thinking – but we

> are meeting the other in genuine encounters of caring and being cared for. There is commitment and there is choice (p. 175).

For Noddings, caring is not simply an attribute but something a person decides to do. "Caring then, is simultaneously a choice, a responsibility, and an obligation, involving both affect and volition" (Goldstein, 1999, p. 656). Laura communicated this depth of choice when she said, "knowing how she could be, helped me sort of track her into that direction … encouraging her to be herself. … Because it's all about the being, the person." This commitment and sense of ethical responsibility is, in Noddings' argument, central to supporting the other's learning. She maintains, "One must meet the other in caring. From this requirement there is no escape for one who would be moral" (1986, p. 201).

In this way we are invited to understand being caring as a complex moral stance or relational responsibility (Gergen, 2009). The mutuality of relationship established and sustained by some participants suggested what Noddings (1986) calls "being present to the other" (p. 176) in such a way that there was an overlap between self and other, or an interdependence, or mutuality between mentor and pre-service teacher. To use the language of other philosophers, when the mentor teacher was "face to face" (Levinas, 1991) with their pre-service teacher or when they encountered the pre-service teacher as "Thou" (Buber, 1970) they were truly present and the self/other boundary was dissolved. This interdependence or relational responsibility is important because mutuality appears to enhance the co-creation of meaning and sense making about student learning and teaching. Listening to these 30 mentor teacher voices assists us to understand that this co-creation of meaning involves acknowledging the effort and emotional complexity of what is involved.

This is hard relational work and the data indicated that some mentor teachers, in particular Adrienne, Lisa, Katrina and Jill in the secondary school context and Lucy in the primary school context, appeared to place limitations on the extent to which they chose to be present for their pre-service teachers. They appeared to understand their mentoring role as being, in Feiman-Nemser's (2012, p. 125) words, "local guides" who provided a place to observe and to practise teaching (Hall et al., 2008). While all emphasised what scholars have called the "discourse of support" (Carver & Katz, 2004, p. 450) only some participants demonstrated an ethic of care or relational responsibility for their pre-service teacher that paralleled a reciprocal or mutual learning interconnection that has been noted in the literature as highly supportive of a pre-service teacher's learning to teach (Le Cornu, 2005, 2010, 2012; Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008; Paris, 2013; Patrick, 2013; White et al., 2010).

Hence, in prioritising relationships participants demonstrated what could be described as a continuum in how they understood their role as a mentor teacher: from appearing to understand the role as being supportive of a novice learning to teach through to a role that established greater connection and relational responsibility. This continuum was illustrated in Table 4.1 in chapter 4, *Being Relational*. What the data emphasises is what Jordan and Walker (2004) acknowledge, "connection is not a simple, cosy, or easy concept" (p. 1)

While much of the scholarly literature holds reciprocity or mutuality as aspirational for the mentor teacher role the Findings indicated two key areas of being relational where more emphasis needs to be made if this aspiration is to be achieved. They are: how participants considered their pre-service teacher as a learner and their own orientation as a continuing learner.

7.4.2 Positioning the Pre-service Teacher as a Learner

Listening to the mentor teacher voice assists our understanding of the subtle relational depths involved in mentoring pre-service teachers. How these participants talked about their mentoring role revealed attitudes and beliefs that influenced the extent to which connection and a mutual learning relationship was established. In particular, how the pre-service teachers were "legitimately positioned as [adult] learners in classrooms" (Edwards, 2015a, p. 54) had relational implications that influenced the extent to which interdependence or mutuality in the relationship was achieved.

The data indicated that some mentor teachers (in particular, Adrienne, Katrina, Lisa, and Jill) maintained a distance between themselves and their pre-service teachers. While they were supportive they nevertheless appeared to hold the adult learner, for the most part, individually responsible for their successes or failures in the classroom. They could be interpreted as demonstrating what Britzman et al., (1997) describe as one of the central problems of teacher education, "the ethos of individualism". These participants talked about pre-service teachers being successful because they were 'naturals', they 'had it' or 'got it', and, because learning to teach lay primarily with the pre-service teacher, they understood their mentoring role as limited to providing a place for practice with occasional advice.

What the Findings revealed is how repetition of vague language and slogans can influence perceptions and subsequently behaviour. Talk of pre-service teachers as 'naturals' or as having "the right personality" (Jill), resonated with Valencia et al., (2009) who note that mentor teachers who hold the view "you're a natural teacher or you're not" tend to "offer their classroom and then get out of the way" (p. 311). While

these participants remained in the classroom this way of talking about their pre-service teachers implied they assumed pre-service teachers learn to teach primarily as a result of natural talent, or are self-made. This is a "highly individualistic explanation" (Britzman, 1991, p. 230) and oversimplifies what is being asked of both pre-service and mentor teacher. Furthermore, using these terms severely limits mentor teachers taking responsibility for the relationship and developing an understanding about what learning to teach entails.

By contrast, assuming a mutual stance with a novice meant empathising with the practice demands involved in learning to teach. Having a sense of what learning to teach entailed led other mentor teachers (particularly, Alan, Judy, Kristina, Laura, Susan and Stephanie) to emphasise that learning to teach, "doesn't come naturally" (Stephanie) and pre-service teachers "don't know what they don't know" (Laura, Judy, Kristina). As we saw in chapter 4 *Being Relational*, this latter group of participants allocated time to discover novices' backgrounds and preconceptions about teaching. The data indicated that this meant learning about prior experiences, acknowledging limitations in their capacity to interpret classroom events, and adjusting expectations. As Gonzalez and Carter (1996) explain, mentor teachers "need to have a rich understanding of the frames that novices bring to teaching so they can address these preconceptions and avoid miscommunicating their intentions and insights" (p. 46). That is, some mentor teachers understood that in their mentoring role they needed to have the pre-service teacher in mind as a learner. This involved what Fletcher (2004) describes as taking "the learner's intellectual or emotional reality into account [and being] focused on the other (What does she /he need to hear?), rather than on self (What would I like to say)" (p. 275). Hence, these mentor teachers demonstrated an understanding of learning to teach "from both the

perspective of the individual learner, and that of the learning situation" (Hodkinson et al., 2008, p. 28).

Another expectation about pre-service teachers that seemed to invite a sense of distance in the relationship was the view that certain attributes or capabilities such as basic social skills and the capacity to demonstrate initiative should be sufficiently developed in an adult pre-service teacher. Because "you can't teach initiative" (Katrina) no responsibility could be taken for this aspect of the relationship. Stepping aside from this responsibility can potentially lead to a breakdown in communication. Hamel and Jaasko-Fisher (2011) demonstrate this through what they describe as "the dance of initiative" on the part of both mentors and pre-service teachers. Hastings (2010) describes initiative as "having a go," and Katrina described it as, "they walk in and they're part of the room." In this way some mentor teachers, and Lucy is a good example, held expectations that their pre-service teacher should know how and when to interact with students and be able to judge what needed doing in the classroom and act.

When expectations, such as those around taking initiative, are not made explicit or are misread there are challenges for the mentor-pre-service teacher relationship. Scholars (e.g. Graves, 2010; Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011; Hastings, 2010; Sim, 2011) note that when expectations are not met interpersonal demands are heightened and frequently conflict in the relationship is avoided (Hawkey, 1997). Challenges in the relationship can contribute to a sense of separation and Bradbury and Koballa (2008) highlight this through the metaphor of "borders to cross". They illustrate that the virtual boundary between mentor and pre-service teacher can be difficult to cross largely because expectations are not made explicit. These insights suggest that some mentor teachers might benefit from support within the school, or

external to it, that facilitates them being able to debrief these kind of issues and assists them in building the communicative or relational competences to move forward positively in their mentoring role.

Furthermore, the relational detail provided by Lucy and Christine in particular, highlighted that moving from a focus on teaching students to working in a one-to-one relationship with an adult pre-service teacher should not be assumed to be an easy transition. As Peters and Pearce (2012) observe the "challenges and significance of this relationship with adults is often overlooked" (p. 250). The presence of another adult in the classroom, particularly when they are of a mature age, adds an emotional complexity well documented by Hastings (2010). Lucy believed her pre-service teacher was judging her and this was an example of the "dark side of mentoring" (Bullough, 2005). Being able to work through feelings of discomfort and the temptation to avoid conflict required considerable relational confidence and competence. Gergen (2009) argues, "we seldom stray away from our zone of comfort" (p. 181) and the data demonstrated that prioritising comfort and avoiding conflict did not help participants such as Lucy build relational responsibility.

Some of the mentor teachers' comments indicated that when they talked about their pre-service teachers having initiative they also seemed to mean they should know what they wanted to learn while in their mentor teacher's classroom. Adrienne, Katrina, Lisa and Lucy appeared to understand their role as one that responded to an agenda brought by the pre-service teachers from their university course. Adrienne for instance relied "on the student you have – telling you what they want out of it."

Comments such as this may indicate limitations in connecting with the other as a learner together with understanding what it takes to learn to teach. While they provided opportunities to talk about teaching they assumed a "hands off facilitator

orientation" (Yendol-Hoppey, 2007, p. 691), to their role. By contrast, other mentor teachers, and Laura is a good example, were clear that a pre-service teacher will not necessarily bring a learning to teach agenda with them from their university course and hence, "you can't sort of say 'what would you like to learn?'" For Laura, care for the relationship involved being present for a learner and attending to the practice demands.

Hence, when mentor teachers took a more distant stance to the relationship, or the middle position in Table 4.1, they seemed to perceive their pre-service teacher as an autonomous individual, "fundamentally independent" (Gergen, 2009, p. 4), rather than sensing interdependence or "self-in-relation" (Surrey, 1991). Scholars note that distance in the mentoring relationship can be prompted by challenges with an adult learner, an absence of collaborative strategies and an emphasis on providing a place to practice rather than building a relationship as a basis for learning to teach (Hall et al., 2008; Hobson et al., 2009; Jaspers et al., 2014). Here the Findings suggest unchallenged slogans that inform inner attitudes and beliefs, and in particular emphasise an individualistic orientation to learning to teach, may also subtly influence perceptions and behaviour.

To consciously assume an educational role and form a pedagogical relationship required mentor teachers to understand their pre-service teacher as a learner (Achinstein & Athanases, 2005; Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1996; Norman, 2011; Timperley, 2001). Participants such as Alan, Barbara, Laura and Kristina understood their mentor teacher role as taking responsibility for a relationship with an adult learner and realised they needed to be "open-minded that here is someone who really wants to learn and how can I best support them to do that" (Barbara).

The Findings revealed the mentor teachers who demonstrated they understood their pre-service teachers as learners emphasised respecting difference (Howells, 2012; Visser, 2009). “They’re all different personalities, and how you deal with one might be totally different to how you approach another” (Chloe). They acknowledged, as scholars have noted (Hobson et al., 2009; van Velzen et al., 2012), that some pre-service teachers needed more assistance than others in their transition to the teaching role. Hence in some cases this meant providing opportunities to learn initiative (Stephanie) and in others “persevering” by not giving up on a pre-service teacher who was on the cusp of failing (Laura).

Furthermore, as we saw in chapter 4, many mentor teachers explicitly expressed how they valued and appreciated their pre-service teacher. They had, to quote the mentor teachers, “amazing ideas”, and were a “massive assistance.” They also noted that they could learn from their pre-service teacher “they were valuable contributors” (Judy) and “I learned a lot from them” (John). Gergen (2009) calls this appreciation of the other the “injection of value in co-creating the worth of the partnership” (p. 179) and notes that affirmation welcomes the “fledgling” (p. 315) into the process of meaning making. Explicitly valuing the other interrupts assuming the traditional hierarchical view of mentoring that was encapsulated in the first definition of mentoring in chapter 2: “The one-to-one support of a novice or less experienced practitioner by a more experienced practitioner” (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 207).

Consciously expressing appreciation and the value of having the pre-service teacher with them in their classroom established a more fluid relationship and the possibility of “sharing power” (Fletcher, 2004). In this way, as illustrated by the third position in Table 4.1 where there is an overlap between self and other. Affirmation also increased the likelihood of connection and mutuality because the understanding

that we are all dependent on others was enhanced. Many mentor teachers expressed their appreciation for feeling "revitalised" and for having an increased understanding about how they were teaching. They took pleasure in being challenged while they also noted with delight the "real growth" (Claire) of their pre-service teacher. In Fletcher's words they were working towards "growth-fostering interaction" (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007, p. 381) or mutuality. They demonstrated that they felt a responsibility "to contribute to the growth of the other" (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007, p. 384)

In this way the data revealed that for some mentor teachers the mentoring relationship was mutually empowering. Fletcher (2004) describes the relational skills involved in achieving this:

> One is skill in empowering others (sharing – in some instances even customising – one's own reality, skill knowledge, etc. in ways that make them accessible to others) and the other skill in being empowered (willingness to step away from the expert role and/or minimise status differences in order to learn from or be influenced by the other). In other words, it implies a belief that each party is dependent on the other to achieve a desired outcome and both parties will be motivated to engage in the interaction (pp. 276-277).

In the ways outlined here by Fletcher (2004) some participants demonstrated a strong sense of interconnectedness particularly when, as will be addressed later in this chapter, they shared a belief that the "desired outcome" was, in participants' words "moving students' learning forward." Claire emphasised this sense of interconnectedness when she explained that it was important to work at seeing the classroom from the perspective of the pre-service teacher. "I guess not having that hubris of practice. It's almost willing to put ego aside and just be open to someone

who's learning, who will ask questions that unsettle you without realizing that that's what they're doing." In this example responsibility and care for relationship was "primary" (Gergen, 2009).

Participants such as Alan, Barbara, Chloe, Laura, and Kristina demonstrated what Gergen (2009, p. 365) calls "relational immersion" with their pre-service teacher. They communicated a sense that they were, using Levinas's (1991) language, "face-to-face" with their pre-service teacher and that they were concerned to build an authentic relationship where they were present (Noddings, 1986; Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006) and the novice was 'seen' (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006; Surrey, 1991) and understood as a learner.

The voices of the mentor teachers highlight the importance of how they view their adult learner and their capacity to position themselves as a teacher of teaching. That is, a part answer to the research question is that for these mentor teachers their understanding of their role was "a direct reflection of the beliefs and assumptions [they held] about the learner" (Bruner, 1996, p. 47).

7.4.3 Orienting Self as a Continuing Learner

The second aspect of prioritising the relationships that appeared central to assuming relational responsibility was for mentor teachers to deliberately take the orientation of someone continuing to learn about teaching. Twenty-six of the participants talked about continuing to learn to teach. However, for some the stance of being a continuing learner nevertheless communicated a sense of separation from their pre-service teacher while others reported shared learning situations. The distinction is subtle but the latter position (as illustrated in Table 4.1) communicated a

depth of interdependence and mutuality of learning that in turn demanded relational responsibility.

Explicitly positioning themselves as still learning to teach, sharing weaknesses and uncertainties, was, as scholars (e.g. Hudson, 2016a) note, an important way to establish trust and build connection in the mentoring relationship. For some mentor teachers this involved a focus on self: stories of past teaching mistakes (Miles), or noting current mistakes (Joe, Patricia). Like many others Adrienne noted, "we all make mistakes." She indicated that she would be honest "and say oh that didn't work very well today, I shouldn't have done that with that group, I'll try something else tomorrow." Adrienne's story focused on herself. It communicated her honesty, her willingness to alert her pre-service teacher to something she was critical about in her own teaching and supply the information about how she would improve tomorrow. The narrative of mistakes made by this group of mentor teachers privileged their expertise in rectifying the mistake and moving on. They were "willing to be vulnerable to another" (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 17) but in a controlled way.

In contrast, other participants (for instance Alan, Carmel, Charles, Elizabeth, Jackie, and Kristina) reported moving beyond talking about mistakes and described how they participated in problems of practice and shared concerns about student learning with their pre-service teacher. Believing "we're almost learning alongside each other" (Kristina) exemplified mentor teachers who assumed a mutual learning stance and appeared to "recognise vulnerability as part of the human condition" (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007, p. 383). They made themselves in Palmer's words (1998) "vulnerable in the service of learning" (p. 10). They understood their role as one that invited them to assume a stance that they expected to learn and grow through their mentoring role (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007, p. 384). They talked about themselves as

co-learners (Le Cornu, 2005; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017) in the relationship. At the same time they demonstrated that you are never finished with learning to teach because, as Rita emphasised, “there’s always going to be something that you can do better.”

Orienting themselves as continuing interdependent learners required trust. Alan and others commented, as scholars have observed, that trust in the mentoring relationship is critical and takes time to develop (Awaya et al., 2003; Hudson, 2016a; Le Cornu, 2005, 2010; Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006). The PiTE program provided a school placement over a year and participants commented that this respected the time required for the depth of the relationship to develop. These participants dismissed the short block practicums as “flying in, flying out” and this meant “you don’t find out a lot about them so it’s harder” (Lucy). Claire explained how the relationship with the PiTE pre-service teachers was different to those whose school experience was in short blocks of three to four weeks, “it was just a different relationship and trust level, working trust.”

Mentor teachers who assumed a mutual learning stance emphasised a sense of partnership with their pre-service teacher, being in “a team teaching role” (Elizabeth). This is what Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010, p. 52) describe as “a non-hierarchical, reciprocal relationship” and Yendol-Hoppey (2007, p. 695) calls a “progressively collaborative mentoring orientation”. Yendol-Hoppey’s use of the term “progressively” captures well the way these participants described how mutuality and co-learning built and deepened over the year. In this way, for these mentor teachers mentoring became what Beyene et al., (2002) describe as a “mutually beneficial relationship in which both the mentor and the protégé grow as a result of their relational connection” (p. 87).

Nevertheless, while time over the year was seen as extremely valuable, the data communicated that time alone did not inevitably lead to relational responsibility. Specific effort at establishing connection was required. Another important feature of mutuality was, as shown in chapter 4, the conscious and careful use of inclusive language. Kristina, for instance, described how her talk consciously communicated the sense of partnership and a mutual stance: "Sometimes I'll put, "now how could *we* have improved that, using that *we*." Several participants Alan, Barbara, John, Kristina, and Laura in particular, positioned themselves as co-learners, co-planners, co-teachers, co-assessors and co-inquirers in the sense discussed by scholars such as Feiman-Nemser (1998), Le Cornu (2005), Trevethan and Sandretto (2017) and Kriewaldt, Nash, et al., (2018). The use of the pronoun 'we' revealed how important this sense of interconnection was for the relational responsibility they brought to their mentor teacher role. They demonstrated that their learning, and their pre-service teachers' learning to teach drew not on processes of separation and individualisation but rather in a context of relational connection (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007).

7.5 Demonstrating Intentionality

The Findings suggested that in understanding purpose in their mentoring role the mentor teachers did not draw on a shared theory about what learning to teach entailed in the practical aspect of initial teacher education. As Ellis (2010) argues, "How teachers' learning is conceptualised in relation to experience in schools, does not seem to have taken place" (p. 111). When participants were asked what guided their mentoring practice their answers indicated they drew on their experiences as teachers or how they recollected, and frequently took a different approach to, how they themselves were mentored as pre-service teachers. Most indicated they were not

guided by the newly published graduate standards nor were they influenced by their pre-service teachers' university course work.

Where some participants appeared to be emerging a theory of mentoring practice it was happening in isolation in their own classroom and was informed largely from making connections between teaching students and teaching their pre-service teacher. The essence of being intentional in this context, as illustrated in Figure 7.1, was providing an intentional educative experience (Feiman-Nemser, 2001b; Schwille, 2008; Trevethan, 2017). Some mentor teachers appeared to be intentional in this way. They were purposeful and had outcomes in mind. Other mentor teachers, however, seemed to interpret their role as being one of providing chance opportunities. The sections that follow examine the variations in how the mentor teachers reported being intentional in their mentoring role, their capacity to be educative and the part played by taking relational responsibility.

7.5.1 Experience as *the* Teacher of Teaching

All the mentor teachers valued learning from experience. They argued, as have scholars (for instance Hagger et al., 2008), that experience is vital. "You learn through actually doing it, so I think experience is huge" (Chloe). Nevertheless, scholars note (Dewey, 1938; Ellis, 2010; Hobson et al., 2009) that relying on experience to teach teaching has serious limitations, particularly when teaching performance is emphasised over the thinking behind teaching decisions.

Not all the mentor teachers appeared to recognise these limitations. Some communicated the sense that experience itself could be a sufficient teacher of how to teach. This view was emphasised by statements that teaching itself, or aspects of teaching could not be taught. In this way participants, such as Jackie and Katrina,

expressed a belief, also reported and critiqued by scholars (e.g. Southgate et al., 2013; Zeichner, 2010), that teaching is something one learns from experience, on one's own, by doing (Feiman-Nemser, 1998). Katrina expressed this view most strongly "teaching is an art and in some ways it can't be taught." In taking a 'learning by osmosis' view, as Miles did, some mentor teachers demonstrated a belief that over time their pre-service teacher would "see and pick up on something on his or her own" (Schwille, 2008, p. 148) and learn to teach.

In this way some participants communicated a sense that they did not understand mentoring as a "complex activity" (Ambrosetti et al., 2014, p. 34). A small number of participants seemed confident that experience itself would teach pre-service teachers to teach because, "that's just practice … just experience" (Jill). Katrina, for instance, remarked, "I didn't give her exact things to observe, I don't remember asking them to focus on anything." This accords with a general view in the research that many mentor teachers are "hesitant to play an active role in supporting novices' learning to teach" (Wang & Odell, 2002, p. 511). Rather, assumptions were made that the pre-service teachers could interpret and operationalize what they observed, that is "notice discrete pedagogical moves" (Norman, 2011, p. 57) and infer the mentor teacher's plan from observing his or her teaching. When mentor teachers held this view, or, some version of it, they appeared to understand their role as primarily providing a safe place to practise, thus limiting their assumption of relational responsibility.

Hence, the data invites consideration that some teachers, who accept the mentor teacher role, will possibly hold the view that it is not their responsibility to teach pre-service teachers to teach. Rather learning to teach must be left to time at the "coalface" (Miles) or experience in the classroom. This seemed to be how most

mentor teachers believed they themselves had learned to teach, that is, on their own, in their own classroom, over time. As Elmore (2004) expressed it, "Educators, like most practitioners, learn most of what they know from what they do" (p. 216). The data revealed just how strongly learning "from what they do," in the isolation of their own classrooms, can influence some participants' beliefs about how one learns to teach. Subsequently these beliefs appear to reduce the mentor teacher's role in the learning process and lessen the likelihood that they will assume relational responsibility with their pre-service teacher. For these reasons these Findings suggest that mentoring programs need to be supported by professional learning structures that surface and examine these beliefs in safe ways.

Such an analysis of beliefs is required because the weakness for pre-service teachers is in "objectifying experience as a map" (Britzman, 1991, p. 7) that can be followed without guided meaning-making. This can result in an overemphasis on observed behaviour and insufficient attention to the thinking behind the doing. Nevertheless, the belief that "teaching is very much a doing profession" (Katrina), meant mentor teachers such as Adrienne, Katrina, Miles, Jackie, Lisa, and Lucy, who believed some version of 'teaching cannot be taught', left much of the learning "in the hands of the novices themselves" (Wang & Odell, 2007, p. 476) because, "the more they do, the better they'll be" (Katrina). In some instances, as reported by the mentor teachers, only doing was valued (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 1999).

Learning from experience may be vital but it may not be educative. Indeed the key point is that learning from experience can be mis-educative. As Dewey (1938) explained, experience can "arrest and distort growth" by leading to routine actions that do not invite critical awareness. Relying on observation and mimicking teacher behaviours is an "impoverished understanding of experience" (Ellis, 2010, p. 105). A

deeper understanding is required, where mentor teachers are alert to the fact that "one's experience is always mediated by others, present or absent, who have created the trails we might follow, and by one's own history, intentions and expectations" (Edwards, 2015a, p. 56).

Because experience is always mediated, mentor teachers needed to be alert to what "trails" their pre-service teachers might be following. One, that Susan and Alan commented on, was that pre-service teachers were likely to draw interpretations and meaning about how to teach from their "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975) and the "practices of their former teachers" (Kennedy, 1999, p. 55). This was "not always the best way" (Alan) and indeed could be, as Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann's (1985) maintain, a pitfall because "unquestioned familiarity … arrests thought and may mislead it" (Feiman-Nemser, 2012, p. 170).

Another "trail" might result from incomplete interpretations drawn from observing their mentor teacher. Learning from observation depended on what the pre-service teacher was capable of "recognising in the example" (Edwards, 2015a, p. 50) and sometimes this recognition was incomplete. The data showed that when the reproduction of teaching behaviour seemed to mimic the teacher, the feedback the mentor teacher received was that learning to teach was successful. Barbara, for instance, found her pre-service teacher "just picked things up". Bruner (1986) warns that, "if all is conformity, we adapt and may even stop noticing" (p. 46). Surprise, Bruner argues, has the capacity to alert us to what is being taken for granted. Carmel, was surprised when her pre-service teacher had not observed all that was required for managing a transition from a mat activity to collecting lunch boxes. Christine, as documented in chapter 5, learned the weakness of her presuppositions and

expectations. Both Carmel and Christine came to understand that their mentoring role required greater relational responsibility and intentionality.

Understanding learning to teach as "that's just experience" (Jill), as shown by these Findings, must be challenged and the meaning of this mantra needs to be analysed, critically examined and better understood by any teacher taking on the mentor teacher role. This requires learning that knowledge of teaching and learning is socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1978) and situated in the specific classroom contexts (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The following section considers mentor teachers who, while they did not always appear to be explicitly drawing on socio-cultural theories, nevertheless emphasised intentionality and demonstrated relational responsibility in how they talked about their understanding of the mentor teacher role.

7.5.2 Providing an Educative Experience

Mentor teachers who, like Stephanie, believed that learning to teach was "not osmosis" talked about designing, what some scholars have called, intentionally pedagogical experiences (Hudson, 2013; van Velzen & Volman, 2009) for their pre-service teachers. That is they demonstrated deliberateness, purpose, design, having a plan, goal, aim, target or outcome in mind. In Feiman-Nemser's (2012, p. 249) words they conceptualised mentoring "as an educational intervention." Having this sense of purpose appeared to be influenced by two orientations to the mentoring role. Firstly understanding their pre-service teacher as an adult learner and secondly emerging a theory about what is involved in learning to teach.

Understanding their pre-service teacher as a learner immediately emphasised how the relational was intertwined with the capacity to be intentional. These Findings highlighted, as discussed above, that it made a difference to understand the other adult

in the room as both a knower, with a biography, but also a learner, learning to notice, understand and act appropriately. As Laura explained "You've got to believe that they're there to learn and you're there to teach them." Providing an educative experience begins by intentionally choosing to care for the other as a learner (Noddings, 1986), and understanding the learning from the perspective of the learner (Achinstein & Athanases, 2005; Hodkinson et al., 2008). This meant considering what was entailed in learning to teach because "the demands in the practices which are inhabited by student teachers" (Edwards, 2015a, p. 48) require understanding as well as what the specific pre-service teacher brings to the situation.

Taking on the learner's perspective involved having a heightened appreciation that pre-service teachers needed assistance to "notice and understand" (Patricia) what was happening in the classroom. For some mentor teachers understanding what the novice will possibly not notice (Edwards, 2015a; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; Grossman, 2011) informed decisions about teaching planning, focusing observations and modelling teaching practice. Kristina, for instance, demonstrated a belief that at times the focus needed to be directed, "you do have to decide how you will demonstrate this and what will she get out of that. … I'll be saying … this is what I want you to look at." That is, Kristina, in Feiman-Nemser's (1998) words, had "little faith in unfocused observations, unexamined practice, trial and error learning" (p. 71).

The mentor teachers who took an educative orientation appeared to understand their role involved consciously structuring, supporting and sequencing the experiences provided in their classrooms. Some, such as Claire, talked about scaffolding experience and thinking about "how you will get them to a point," thus emphasising the importance of having a conscious goal towards which the learning is planned. Talk about scaffolding the pre-service teacher's experience is the classroom indicated

that several mentor teachers thought about how to balance the support and challenge they were providing. They reported keeping experiences safe "before it's the big step into taking the whole class" (Christine). Elizabeth kept the focus on "really small parts" while feeling for when to push towards the next challenge "when she was ready to get out of her comfort zone and try something different" (Elizabeth). This is what Rodgers, (2002a), drawing on Dewey, calls "intelligent action". Intelligent action is characterised by a focus on growth and is considered rather than left to chance, and it "is shaped by data garnered from experience at one end and one's goal or purpose at the other. Critical is the ability to perceive and then weave meaning among the threads of experience" (Rodgers, 2002a, pp. 847-848).

Weaving meaning from the threads of experience was an act of co-construction that required relational responsibility. The key focus for this meaning making was the students' learning, or "moving the students forward." Alan, Barbara, Carmel, Claire, Diane, Harry, John, Judy, Kristina, Laura, Lucy, Marcus, and Stephanie made this focus an explicit purpose that framed the pre-service teacher's time in the classroom. In this way these participants were making "what matters … visible" (Edwards, 2010, p. 21) for their pre-service teacher. As Carmel explained "sometimes we get caught up in the little things that work. We need to make sure that it's linked to improving student learning all of the time."

The mentor teachers referred to above appeared to understand the classroom as a site for learning about student learning rather than simply as a place for the practice and performance of teaching. They purposefully sequenced experiences by "creating structures of practices where the problems, surprises, detours, accidents, and intentions are thought about in terms of development" (Britzman et al., 1997, p. 19). They talked about making these experiences manageable, "small parts of the whole"

(Maynard & Furlong, 1994, p. 79) or what Lampert (2010) describes as "decomposing teaching into component practices" (p. 27). As Stephanie noted, "all the little things all need to be broken down step by step … It's a slow process."

The component practices reported by these mentor teachers included: getting to know the students; taking on specific classroom routines; teaching individuals and small groups before moving to working with the whole class. This indicated the relational sensitivity of mentor teachers to "reading the play" (Marcus), "judging readiness" (Elizabeth) or in Feiman-Nemser's (2012) terms "careful judgement and principled actions based on mentors' ongoing assessment of the novice as a learner to take on new teaching challenges" (p. 242). In this way it was important to keep the learning "very gradual" (Carmel).

Some participants, and mostly those in primary schools, appeared to consciously use socio-cultural terms to talk about considering a sequence of learning for their pre-service teacher and were "mindful" about how they eased the pre-service teachers into their classrooms. For instance, Alan and Patricia used Vygotsky's (1978) term "gradual release of responsibility" to describe assisting the pre-service teacher's performance (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978) through incremental steps. These concepts appeared to be part of how these teachers thought about teaching their students and they transferred the terms to their explanations of their mentoring practice. As Alan maintained, "teaching's not something you just come and do." In consciously selecting experiences that would be foundations for future growth and learning for their pre-service teacher, participants such as Alan appeared to be intentionally thinking about what Dewey (1938) called continuity and implied he had a learning-to-teach curriculum in mind.

An important component of this learning-to-teach curriculum was teaching the pre-service teachers to "contain" (Kennedy, 2016) student behaviour. This was acknowledged as an area of learning fraught by ambiguity, "sometimes there's black and white and sometimes there's grey" (Marcus), "what they struggle with most" (Alan and Lisa) and "hard to teach" (Judy). Martin, Stephanie and Tess noted that subtle preventative measures had to be made explicit for a novice while Alan, Charles and Tess talked about learning by "being in the moment". In the several examples in chapter 5 of how learning in the moment could be supported and mediated by the mentor teacher, Alan's use of the term "tandem" stands out. Alan's team-teaching approach and relational responsibility allowed him to intervene and model an approach to containing behaviour while not implicitly criticising his pre-service teacher, thus 'keeping that confidence up" (Jackie). As Bruner argues (1996), "human learning … is best when it is participatory, proactive, communal, collaborative, and given to constructing meanings rather than receiving them" (p. 84).

Many participants described intentionally working with a pre-service teacher as a 'journey'. Through this gradual learning journey, over a year, these participants were building what they referred to as an understanding of the "layers" of the classroom. As Martin explained, using language precisely and attending to the detail helped build the layers so that "if you're thinking about that, then it's more in the forefront of your head – and therefore you're thinking about it next time a situation arises." This is what scholars (K. Carter, Cushing, Sabers, Stein, & Berliner, 1988; Daniels, 2001; Hudson, 2013) referred to as schema building, "where we make sense of each new experience based on the meaning gleaned from our past experiences, as well as other prior knowledge we have about the world – that we have heard and read of other's experiences and ideas" (Rodgers, 2002a, p. 846).

Central to providing an educative experience was the participation and immersion in joint learning and thinking about the "layers". As Chloe explained, "I don't think there can be any better way of teaching someone rather than them being immersed in it, after immersion, then sitting down and thinking and talking about why." Chloe communicated an understanding that the mentor teacher role necessitated facilitating participation in both practical teaching experience and mediating talk. Co-creating meaning about learning and teaching meant emphasising the "legitimate peripheral participation" (Lave & Wenger, 1991) of the pre-service teacher in shared activity or joint work (Little, 1990a). This emphasis conceptualises the mentoring role as one that positioned them "as co-learners or co-constructors of knowledge" (Le Cornu, 2005, p. 358). As McNamee and Gergen (1999b) argue, "What is important is not products but an immersion in process – continuous processes of comprehending, adjudicating, and adjusting within relationship – continuous engagement in relational inquiry … a continuous engagement in the process of generating meaning" (p. 47).

The data highlighted that all involved in initial teacher education need to address and confront simplistic talk about 'experience'. We need to enable searching conversations that turn experience into an "object of inquiry by student teachers, teachers and university-based teacher educators" (Ellis, 2010, p. 116). Such inquiry will encourage a deeper understanding of what an educative experience looks like for teachers who take on the mentor teacher role. The insights that emerged from the voices of many of these participants provide an answer to the research question and alert us to what is possible. What we learn from these mentor teachers is that core to intentional mentoring is relational responsibility and the effort and skill of developing relational expertise and agency.

The following section looks in more detail at the emphasis these participants placed on reflective conversations and the extent to which these conversations enabled relational responsibility such that they mediated experience and co-created meaning about learning and teaching.

7.6 Emphasising Reflection

The talk between mentor teachers and their pre-service teachers was the glue that held experiences together and gave them meaning. Figure 7.1 illustrates that the essence of being reflective for the mentor teachers was mediating experience through reflective conversations. This entailed intentionally building the language to think and talk about teaching and student learning with their pre-service teachers. The data indicated that in understanding their mentoring role as being reflective participants nevertheless found various aspects personally and professionally challenging. These included verbalising their teaching decisions, their push for specificity of language, mediating experience, including providing feedback and setting goals for improvement. Meeting these challenges required relational responsibility.

7.6.1 Building the Language of Teaching

The Findings reported how these mentor teachers understood reflection as a process through which they developed their pre-service teacher's capacity to see, think and talk about the classroom. That is, a process to negotiate the interpretations of classroom experiences. In this way they appeared to understand reflection as Clarà defined it as, "a thinking process which gives coherence to a situation which is initially incoherent and unclear" (Clarà, 2014). For some this involved becoming more explicit in their own language use and challenging pre-service teachers to be

more specific in their teaching talk. Furthermore, being more explicit appeared to enable some mentor teachers to think more deeply and in more detail about their mentoring role.

Several mentor teachers noted that taking on the mentoring role required them to make explicit the decisions behind their actions. As Carmel explained, "you need to reflect on your own practice first, I think." The tacit nature of teacher knowledge has been well documented (Feiman-Nemser, 1998; Loughran, 2007; Schön, 1983; Warford, 2011). Making what was tacit explicit was challenging and had to be a conscious effort because it requires the "externalisation of processes that are usually carried out internally" (Collins et al., 1989, p. 457). This conscious effort entailed relational responsibility and a sense of agency that was best exemplified by Alan who made his pedagogical thinking visible to his pre-service teacher, "I was doing like a think-aloud with them."

Becoming more explicit involved consciously working at interpretations and meaning making about classroom situations. Many participants (particularly, Barbara, Carmel, Charles, Chloe, Christine, Claire, John, Judy, Kristina, Lucy, Martin, and Steve) acknowledged that having a pre-service teacher enabled them to become more "explicit about what I was doing and why" (Steve). As Trevethen and Sandretto (2017) observe, the process of mentoring "stimulates mentor teacher reflection" (p. 128). This reflection in turn enhanced their capacity to verbalise their decision-making. Having become better processors of their own teaching they were, as Richert (1992) points out, "better able to process the infinite complexity of teaching and learning to teach" (p. 195) for their pre-service teachers.

Chapter 6 demonstrated that reflective conversations between mentor and pre-service teacher were central in building the language of teaching. As Horn and Kane

(2019) argue, for teachers, "meanings, co-constructed in relationship with, and in response to, particular students and communities, matter most" (p. 27). Judy observed, "If you don't have that conversation, sometimes they don't know what to look for. … little things can make a big difference." The ability of the pre-service teachers to read and interpret the classroom as a teacher did not happen automatically. Developing a novice's eye for the detail in the classroom was embedded in social practices (Edwards, 2010; Edwards et al., 2002) where reflective conversations and thoughtful mediation were critical. As Calderhead (1989) explains, pre-service teachers "lack the concepts with which to perceive what is going on" (p. 48). Building these concepts involved conscious attention to language because "language is necessary for thinking … [and] Thought deals not with bare things, but with their *meanings*" (Dewey, 1933, pp. 230-231 emphasis in the original). It is language that "provides increased ability to deal with abstract concepts in representing experiences" (Hoffman et al., 2015, p. 100). Language also carries the sense of the relationship that is being formed.

Conscious attention to language, interpretation and meaning entailed responsibility for the relationship, and thoughtfulness about how and when to intervene. Kristina, for instance, understood she was in a relationship with a novice who required assistance with "unteasing [sic] all the layers of teaching." This kind of understanding was foundational for decisions to intervene and assist pre-service teachers, "with drawing new connections from what we have observed" (Edwards, 2015a, p. 50). The mentor teachers who assumed relational responsibility deliberately built these connections by encouraging pre-service teachers to describe, explain and analyse what they were experiencing, that is go beyond the comment "it was alright" (Alan, Martin). In this way they required an elaborated language or an "expansion of a

rationale" (Timperley, 2001, p. 120). This explicit attention to language enhanced the likelihood of developing mutual interpretations and the potential for mutual learning.

The data showed that being specific and making meaning was hard relational work. Laura talked about "getting her to be much more specific about what her reflection was." Sometimes, as we saw with Diane in chapter 7, thoughtful focused intervention was required to help the pre-service teacher "tune in" to see what Feiman-Nemser (1998) calls the "salient features of a lesson".

In contrast, a small number of participants (for instance, Jill, Katrina and Lisa) used vague or limited language to describe their understanding of the place of reflection within their mentoring role. For instance, when Jill was asked how she went about teaching "tricky pre-service teachers" her response was "I don't know. … I've never even thought about that." An expanded and detailed proficiency with language is crucial to mediating and making meaning of experience. This finding suggests that some teachers taking on the mentor teacher role may need to be supported in building their capacity to talk with specificity about the concepts that represent experience in the classroom. As Rodgers (2002b) notes the "ability to see the world, to be present to it and all its complexities, does not come naturally, but must be learned" (p. 230).

Planning conversations, as we saw in chapters 5 and 6, provided some mentor teachers with the opportunity for what some scholars have called "anticipatory reflection" (Bronkhorst, Meijer, Koster, & Vermunt, 2011; Loughran, 2002). Anticipatory reflection, or thinking forward about teaching, included exploratory conversations that connected content decisions with particular students, a context for building a shared approach or mutuality, and an opportunity to explain the why of decisions or ask questions about them. Alan, for example, would communicate "It's not just this is the way I want it done, go and do it: talk about why it's important, I

would say this is why I find it's important". John would invite his pre-service teachers to justify planning decisions: "Why would you do it that way? … I'm asking because I want to know what the reasons are behind it." As Edwards (2015a) notes, it is important to address the 'why' in order to help the pre-service teacher "access the meaning-making that is valued in the discourse in which they are participating and to reference and test their understandings against those meanings" (Edwards, 2015a, p. 58). Without an insistence on specificity and a predisposition to "challenge their thoughts" (John) the danger was that, as we have seen, slogans can dominate and complex concepts, such as differentiation, remain unexamined and hence poorly understood.

However, the data revealed that not all participants appreciated the potential of planning conversations to build the language and thinking that could guide practice in the uncertain and unpredictable context of classroom teaching. Some, like Katrina communicated that they "don't do written planning anymore" while Lucy, for instance reported, "I didn't work well with their planning beforehand." This is an area that suggests itself as a focus for professional learning for mentor teachers. However, Norman's (2011) experience is salutary. "Teaching planning requires mentors to plan in ways they normally do not engage in" (p. 59). Her study with mentor teachers demonstrates the relational skills required to facilitate both an understanding of, and practice with, "planning for students' learning over time" (p. 65).

Furthermore, the data revealed that pushing for specificity of language required careful, conscious and informed listening to the language used by pre-service teachers in the interactive moment. This was important because "how we make sense depends on how we use language" (Shotter, 1993, p. 2). Listening is necessarily

spontaneous and improvised and underlines the centrality of the relationship. John, Kristina, Laura and Alan, in the quotes in the previous paragraph, conveyed careful listening and the intentionality to challenge thinking. Only two participants, however, noted listening as an area for future personal improvement, Marcus commented "Listening … that's something I've got to get better at over the journey," while Chloe talked about wanting to improve what she called her "active listening."

Careful attentive listening appeared to be at the heart of taking responsibility for a relationship that facilitated reflection. However, the capacity to listen with care and purpose in the mentoring role is under-commented on in the extant literature (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006). If relational responsibility is about the co-creation of meaning then learning to listen must be fundamental. Schultz (2003) emphasises conscious attention to relationship when she defines listening in teaching as "an active, relational, and interpretive process that is focused on making meaning" (p. 8). This involves paying close attention to another because listening closely "implies becoming deeply engaged in understanding what a person has to say through words, gesture, and action. Listening is fundamentally about being in relationship to another and through this relationship supporting change or transformation" (Schultz, 2003, p. 9). Attending to the voices of these mentor teachers allows us to understand that listening well involves care, presence and relational responsibility.

7.6.2 Focusing on Student Learning

The mentor teachers made the primary focus of reflective conversations their students' learning and how to move their learning "forward". As we saw in the chapter *Being Relational* all emphasised the importance of their pre-service teachers forging a relationship with students from their first day in the school. Within this

broad agreement about their purpose some participants provided more specificity than others about emphasising the focus on student learning and why this was important for enabling the learning of their pre-service teacher.

It has not always been thought appropriate to challenge pre-service teachers with the enormity of making a difference to student learning early in their practicum experience. Fuller (1969) argues that a focus on student learning should be allowed to develop gradually over time. Fuller maintains that pre-service teachers need to be assisted with the transition to being a teacher and their 'performance' in front of a class of children. However the danger of this approach is that it may reinforce the idea that teaching is simply a 'performance'. Hence, more recently, scholars (Athanases & Achinstein, 2003; Liu, 2015; Norman & Feiman-Nemser, 2005; Parker-Katz & Bay, 2008; Timperley, 2015) are arguing that a focus on student learning is critical for quality reflective conversations.

The data revealed that all but one of these PiTE participants talked about how they encouraged pre-service teachers to engage with students and their learning from the beginning of the year. Scholars note both the importance of this encouragement and the challenges for pre-service teachers in moving from a focus on self (Athanases & Achinstein, 2003). Ward and McCotter (2004, p. 245) state that a "rigorous emphasis on student learning offers the opportunity for broadening the reflective focus' of pre-service teachers" (p. 245) while Calderhead (1989) maintains that this focus moves the pre-service teachers from prioritising their own performance or what he calls "ego involvement". Lisa appeared to be commenting on the need to work with ego when she talked about pre-service teachers needing to "think past themselves." However she also communicated her uncertainty by adding "but can you teach this?"

Indeed, moving the pre-service teachers to an understanding that the central concern is their students' learning is acknowledged as a significant challenge (Rodgers, 2002a) and "an important shift" (Ward & McCotter, 2004). Chloe made a similar observation, "You've really got to be quite selfless as a teacher because it isn't about you if you're going to be a good teacher," while Feiman-Nemser (2012) acknowledges the challenge when she comments, "perhaps the most difficult is learning to shift attention from themselves as teacher or the subjects they are teaching to what others need to learn" (p. 206). As Rodgers (2002b) argues this shift of focus onto student learning assists teachers and pre-service teachers understand that, "'This isn't about me!' It is, of course, about the teacher and her teaching, but only as they stand in relationship to the students and their learning" (p. 231).

Key to reflecting on student learning was the formation of what these school communities called student-learning intentions. Alan, Barbara, Carmel, Joe, Jackie, Kristina, Laura, Marcus and Miles, for instance, demonstrated that forming learning intentions for students was the foundation for collecting data that enabled mentor teachers and their pre-service teachers to get "a handle on where the student really is at" (Joe). In this way these mentor teachers described pushing their pre-service teachers to "pay attention" (Rodgers, 2002b) and "be specific about what [they were] looking for" (Laura). They were able to focus on what Norman and Feiman-Nemser (2005), after Dewey, called "mind activity". What Dewey noted as essential was that pre-service teachers "observe with reference to seeing the interaction of mind, to see how teacher and pupils react upon each other – how mind answers mind" (1904/1965, p. 155).

Mentor teachers, particularly those operating in a mutual co-learning capacity, emphasised "thinking aloud" (Alan), or "teaching while I was teaching" (John). In

this way some mentor teachers took relational responsibility and shared their interpretations and insights into what was going on in the minds of their pupils in both the affective and cognitive dimensions. That is, they assumed a bifocal vision (Achinstein & Athanases, 2005; Norman & Feiman-Nemser, 2005) on the learning of their students as well as their pre-service teachers.

Assessment knowledge, and particularly the ongoing analysis of student work was essential for focusing pre-service teachers on the progress of individual students (Athanases & Achinstein, 2003). Thinking about progress against learning intentions provided a "framework" (Rodgers, 2002b) for reflective conversations, "back throughout the lesson" (Alan) and constantly invited thoughts about improving practice. Some mentor teachers provided ways to assess formatively throughout a teaching sequence, building "smaller assessment stages" (Miles), rather than at its conclusion. This approach enabled mentor teachers such as Diane, Lucy and Miles to focus reflective conversations on the data being collected and "build that into her feedback on her own reflection on how it's going" (Miles). Others commented on how they made this process manageable for their pre-service teachers by looking at work samples for an individual or very small number of students.

As was documented in chapter 6, the mentor teachers were also learning about learning intentions and using data to assess formatively. Hence many participants communicated the mutuality involved in what was described as joint assessment, or moderation, as a basis for decisions about "what will we do next time?" (Marcus). In this way some mentor teachers demonstrated and encouraged their pre-service teachers to achieve the two goals Rodgers (2002b) aims for with teachers who use her reflective cycles that focus on student learning: first,

> to develop their capacity to observe skill-fully and to think critically about students and their learning so they learn to consider what this tells them about teaching, the subject matter, and the contexts in which all of these interact. The second goal is for them to begin to take intelligent action based on the understanding that emerges" (pp. 231-232).

This focus on learning intentions and achievement required layers of relational responsibility, or caring relationships "all the way down" (Edwards, 2015b, p. 783). Making care for the relationship primary was critical because focusing on student learning invited pre-service teachers into the heart of the "wild triangle" (McDonald, 1992) of students, content and teacher. This is where teaching is endemically uncertain (Edwards et al., 2002; McDonald, 1992; Schön, 1983) and pre-service teachers needed help to understand and work confidently within this uncertainty. This required skilled negotiations and interactions. Some mentor teachers invited their pre-service teachers to be co-problem posers, co-thinkers, co-learners, co-inquirers and co-teachers around puzzles of student learning. For instance, Kristina invited her pre-service teacher to think, "How are we going to know when our students are learning?" while Martin asked, "are my students learning what I think they're learning?"

Mutual work on improving outcomes for individual students demonstrates the potential of viewing the dual role of being a teacher of students and a pre-service teacher as an opportunity rather than "a side task" (Jaspers et al., 2014). As Miles observed, thinking about learning intentions "gets you thinking about what am I really trying to get the kids to learn … think that's what good mentoring would be where you actually do use it as an opportunity to open up your own practice." That is, Miles, who claimed learning to teach could happen through "osmosis," also spoke to the importance of mentor teachers' problematising their practice. In considering that these

30 mentor teachers demonstrated a virtual continuum of relational responsibility Miles reminds us that this interpretation is not about putting participants in boxes, the boundaries between self and other were not fixed but rather continually negotiated (McGowan, Stone, & Kegan, 2007, p. 402). This suggests that working to understand the shades of role understanding participants illuminate is important for considering what might support and enhance them becoming teachers of teaching.

Listening to the voice of these mentor teachers helps us understand that they worked in intricate and complex situations. These contexts required two levels of intelligent action in the moment: to ensure their students' learning moves forward and that their pre-service teachers learn to teach. This in turn required relational responsibility, the co-creation of meaning through reflective conversations.

7.6.3 Reflective Conversations

Placing mediating experience as core to emphasising reflection highlights three aspects from the data. Firstly, the importance of dialogic or exploratory talk (Ellis, 2010) that required mentor and pre-service teacher to reflect critically on experience and the ways it could be made meaningful. Secondly, the importance of skilled observation and interpretation by mentor teachers to inform the reflective talk that mediated a pre-service teacher's practice. Thirdly, the key role of relational responsibility when mediation involved a focus on what needed to be enhanced or improved in the pre-service teacher's practice. In this way the core "function of reflection is to make meaning" because "it is the meaning that one perceives in and then constructs from an experience that gives that experience value" (Rodgers, 2002a, p. 848).

Many mentor teachers emphasised the vital place their conversations had in building the meaningful layers of understanding for their pre-service teachers. As we saw in chapter 6 many participants spoke about making time for conversations in the busy school day. Their mentoring role was understood to be one that prioritised making time for talk, to debrief, unpack and reflect. Scholars agree that "mentoring is essentially about mediation" (Orland-Barak, 2014, p. 180) and, "mentoring is learning in conversations" (Tillema et al., 2015, p. vii). This means that "talk is the central vehicle" (Feiman-Nemser, 2012, p. 136) and the "important enabler" (Sheridan & Young, 2016, p. 2) for learning to teach. However, the talk carried messages about the relationship as well as about teaching. In this way mentoring was "both a relationship and a process" (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005).

The data revealed that some participants described how they used story and anecdotes to mediate experiences and build relationships. Some mentor teachers appeared to understand that voice and narratives are "central elements of a relational process" (Beyene et al., 2002, p. 89). Alan for instance would tell stories about how he "got to this point" with his students. Stories were also the primary way of communicating the grey area between understanding policy about containing student behaviour, remaining positive and keeping students in the classroom. Stories hold the potential for "the braiding of theory with life experiences" (Gallego, Hollingsworth, & Whitenack, 2001, p. 242). In this way stories had an important role to play in reflective conversations and in demonstrating relational responsibility.

Both mentor and pre-service teacher must be invited into the storying of the classroom space because personally meaningful knowledge is socially constructed through shared understandings (Gallego et al., 2001; Vygotsky, 1978). That is the 'I'

at the centre of stories at the beginning of the year "must gradually be replaced by the 'we'" (Gergen, 2009, p. 177) thus providing the "injection of value" (Gergen, 2009, p. 180) that builds mutuality of the classroom experience. The shared storying of the classroom and the sharing of each other is what builds trust in the relationship and establishes the foundation for exploratory talk that provides the foundation for the harder feedback conversations. As Judy expressed her position, "we're all learners … doesn't matter if you make mistakes. But let's talk it through and let's work out how *we* can improve next time". In this way the mentor teacher role can be understood as a complex, sophisticated, "dialogical pedagogical practice" (Edwards-Groves, 2014, p. 163)

Feedback conversations, "one of the hardest things" (Chloe), required mentor teachers to mediate, or make sense of, observations of their pre-service teacher's practice. However, only a small number commented on the challenges involved in developing the capability to observe. A classroom is very complex and requires careful observation and interpretation because as Rodgers (2002a) explains, "what one directs one's attention to – is limited, especially in a classroom setting where it is impossible to see everything" (p. 852). Observation that provided the means to "get below the layers" is "very skilled observation" (Laura). Laura explained that "being specific about what you're looking for" was extremely important. Judy alluded to the challenge when she noted "you can get wrapped up in the whole what's happening in the lesson and give that touchy-feely stuff back", going on to comment that it was vital to "go into more the specifics of what you were focusing on."

As with listening to what is said, observation of action and behaviour involved an interpretation by the mentor teachers. Rodgers (2002a) explains the importance of grounding "thinking in evidence" and applying "the discipline of description as

distinct from interpretation" (p. 853). Relationally this is critical because "language is central in achieving conceptual development from observation" (Edwards, 2015a, p. 50) and interpretation can also communicate judgement. As we saw in chapter 6 several teachers collected evidence through observation to focus the reflective talk on the description or specifics of what happened in the classroom (Richert, 1992; Rodgers, 2002b), "I could say, well this is what happened here" (Chloe). Several participants commented on how they were learning to enhance and improve their reflective conversations. They communicated, as other scholars (Kriewaldt, Nash, et al., 2018) have found, that focusing on descriptions rather than interpretations that could imply judgement was extremely challenging. Judy for instance, commented on how collecting evidence during observations provided a means to contain the potential emotional load of these feedback sessions. In her reflective feedback conversations she could "go into more the specifics," thus providing more detailed and useful feedback for her pre-service teacher that was in Judy's estimation "non-judgemental."

Observation and the collection of evidence "from experiences and actions" (Edwards-Groves, 2014, p. 163) were the basis for reflective conversations that focused on pre-service teachers improving their practice. Only a small number of mentor teachers communicated an awareness of the complexity involved with collecting evidence to guide the observation of practice. Kristina remarked, "It's not until you actually sit down with them and digest how it went, what did you do, what didn't go so well and why do you think that happened that you actually get below the layers." However, these conversations could be emotionally challenging and the temptation, for some mentor teachers, was to avoid conflict, a finding also captured in the scholarly literature (Bullough & Draper, 2004). As Laura expressed, it you "fiddle

around on the outside edge." For many these were "delicate" (Harris & Keogh, 2013) or hard conversations.

For some mentor teachers, finding the right words was challenging. Some were concerned about "hurting people's feelings" (Jill) or communicating a sense of failure (Judy, Laura and Susan). A small number of mentor teachers demonstrated relational responsibility when they reported taking a deliberate appreciative approach. Diane, for example, spoke about being sensitive to the choice of words and how words might affect the relationship. She talked about being tentative with phrasing, and not communicating judgement but inviting questions. As Diane explained, "You need to be honest, but have a way of conveying what you need to convey, without being offensive." In this way some mentor teachers appeared to understand what Gergen (2009) describes as "synchronic sensitivity (that) requires double-listening, to content on the one hand and to the relational trajectory on the other" (p. 166). This is highly skilled relational expertise and for the most part it is wrongly assumed that teachers taking on the mentor teacher role will know how to bring this expertise to their mentoring practice.

Other participants, particularly Carmel, Chloe, Laura, Marcus and Stephanie, emphasised learning to question as important for their reflective conversations, particularly when they were concerned about providing feedback. Some talked about how they grappled with moving from conversations dominated by giving advice or answers to a more inquiring or questioning stance. Laura, for instance, would ask, "What did you notice? What did I do? What did the children do?" As Wang and Odell (2002) observe, "Mentors need to know how to question and help novices to pose questions about prevailing practice and identify the assumptions underlying one another's teaching" (p. 521). Learning how to question in this sophisticated way did

not come naturally for the mentor teachers in this study. As Chloe reported professional learning in Cognitive Coaching (Costa & Garmston, 2002) "helped me" to ask questions that "could uncover more layers." Research reveals how complex and nuanced the act of questioning can be. For instance, how something as seemingly basic as the mentor's opening question can "influence the flow" (Kim & Silver, 2016, p. 215) of a pre-service teacher's reflective talk. The mentor teacher voice, together with insights from the extant literature, highlights how questioning is both a skill and a sophisticated relational competence. Carefully designed professional learning argued for by some scholars (e.g., Timperley, 2001) needs to be provided to support mentor teachers with this area of expertise.

Participants also reported encouraging their pre-service teachers' questions. This required trust in the relationship. By inviting questions, mentor teachers treated pre-service teachers as active learners and facilitated "their construction and reconstruction of the meanings of specific but crucial events and situations in teaching and learning rather than simply offering suggestions and solutions" (Wang & Odell, 2002, p. 524). Encouraging questions meant being open-minded, positive and oriented to forging a mutual learning relationship. This is what Susan conveyed when she commented, "I want to be questioned and challenged … because it challenges the reason why I do the things I do and it helps me to improve."

Many participants also talked about encouraging the pre-service teachers to think for themselves. Barbara explained that, "I wanted her to do the thinking herself" and Stephanie stressed, "they really have to think." Over the year they reported encouraging their pre-service teachers to be the ones doing the talking. As Schultz (2003) points out, "the emphasis on teaching as telling ignores teachers' responsibility to ensure that students become engaged in the process of constructing their own

understanding" (p. 8). This is not a straightforward either/or decision but, as Lucy expressed it, a "delicate balance", and "about relationships". This involved a "dance … moving from a consultant stance to a collaborative stance" (Athanases & Achinstein, 2003, p. 1498).

Many mentor teachers appeared to understand that pre-service teachers become "conscious of what they know and believe as they hear themselves speak … being heard and hearing others" (Richert, 1992, pp. 193-194). Kristina was very clear that the pre-service teacher needed to be the one talking and thinking because "metacognition and the reflection on their own learning is really, really important because that's when the learning is deepest." As Lave and Wenger (1991) argue, "the purpose is not to learn *from* talk as a substitute for legitimate peripheral participation; it is to learn *to* talk as a key to legitimate peripheral participation" (p. 109 emphasis in the original). However, this data relies on participants' self-reports and it is salutary to be reminded by scholars that mentor teachers are not always sensitive to the power issues embedded in these conversations (Bradbury & Koballa, 2008; Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010) or that research has revealed it is the teachers who do most of the talking (Hoffman et al., 2015).

Nevertheless, over time some mentor teachers described stepping back: Tess talked about "letting go the reins" and Marcus explained he learned to "hang back. … It wasn't always me coming up with answers or solutions." What stood out from the data was that mentor teachers who were relationally responsible, reported consciously crafting their conversations so that, as the year progressed, they were "driven" by the pre-service teachers. This practice fits with the literature as the pre-service teachers must "claim their work as their own" (Richert, 1992, p. 191), and feel "control over their learning" (Tillema & Smith, 2009, p. 401) because the practice of teaching

"involves adopting the identity of a teacher, being accepted as a teacher, and taking on the common values, language, and tools of teaching" (Lampert, 2010, p. 29). This is a sophisticated relational transition, facilitating the pre-service teacher to "figure out their own way" (Martin) by "being the person" (Laura).

Hence, by facilitating their pre-service teacher's questions and participation in teaching talk many participants used reflective conversations to "pass the baton" and ensure the pre-service teachers gradually took control of their own learning and found their own style or identity as teachers (Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011; van Velzen & Volman, 2009). As we saw in chapter 5, *Being Intentional,* some mentor teachers talked about judging progress and "reading the play" (Marcus). Alan, Barbara, Claire, Chloe, Laura, Tess, Stephanie, Kristina, Rita and Susan all referred to being responsible for the relationship such that they could judge incremental stages of the developmental journey, and, over time, build sufficient confidence for the pre-service teachers' empowered action as a teacher.

7.7 Being a Teacher of Teaching

Being a teacher of teaching is not a destination. Learning to mentor pre-service teachers, like teaching students, is, as the Findings presented above demonstrate, "always a process of becoming" (Britzman, 1991, p. 8). Mentoring practices "and the identities they sustain should be seen as always 'in the making'" (Edwards, 2010, p. 11). However, we seem to "take teachers' learning much less seriously than we have children's" (Ellis, 2010, p. 106). We need to be continuing to learn, not just how to improve student learning but also how to enhance and improve teaching pre-service teachers' learning to teach in school settings. This research asserts that listening to the voices of mentor teachers, and the nuanced detail in these

voices, is critical for improving the mentoring role so they become teachers of teaching. It is their understanding of mentoring and their commitment to improvement that is crucial because it is with them that the core thinking and action resides.

The mentor teachers' voices emphasise that core to being a teacher of teaching is relational responsibility. The Findings communicate that making care for the relationship and the co-construction of meaning central requires mentor teachers take on a number of intricately interconnected stances. For instance, mentor teachers consider themselves and their pre-service teacher to be learners about teaching. Mentor teachers establish an interdependent mutual learning and inquiring orientation to the problems of learning and teaching practice. They understand teaching as complex and that both they and their pre-service teacher are vulnerable and will "struggle" (Elizabeth) at times because "that's teaching" (Alan). Mentor teachers place their students' learning as the priority focus for their pre-service teachers. Consequently they understand their position as caring mediators for the novice. They are guided by a belief in the pre-service teacher's capacity to learn and grow. They understand the central place of their meaning making conversations and the need to consciously work at the language they use both for the challenge of being specific about meaning and to acknowledge the inevitable emotional dimensions of working in relationship with another adult. They appreciate their pre-service teacher's contribution and understand mentoring as an opportunity to learn and grow.

Expertise in mentoring that accept these stances and builds relational responsibility will evolve and develop with the experience of mentoring practice, but only if mentor teachers are supported in learning from it. Talbot (2018, p. 96) argued that mentors:

> need a ‘space’ in which they have opportunities to, at the very least, audit their existing mentoring practice, read and reflect on research concerned with both the pedagogical skills of mentoring and the development of mentoring as an educative stance and implement and critique innovations in their mentoring practice.

In the first instance, it should be school communities that provide the space for mentor teacher learning. School communities might explicitly consider the discourse they use when they talk about learning to teach and their priorities for pre-service teachers. The Findings showed how some mentor teachers’ language revealed persistent beliefs that provide ‘barriers’ to becoming a teacher of teaching. Casually used terms such as “naturals” and “just experience” appear to influence attitudes and beliefs that interfere with intentionally mediating learning to teach. The discourse of school communities can influence the language that seeks to understand and inform teaching practice. Certainly scholars (e.g. Putnam & Borko, 2000) have argued that becoming a teacher of teaching is facilitated, but also possibly constrained, by the language worlds or the discourse of school communities.

The sense that shared narratives have the capacity to “construct” identities (Bruner, 1996, p. 42) was supported by the Findings in this thesis. The data revealed how the school discourse framed the attitudes, beliefs, dispositions, priorities and actions of participants. Because “we all know that it is tough” (Jackie), there was a sense of a “collective responsibility” (Parker-Katz & Bay, 2008, pp. 1265-1266) around how to provide the best opportunities for all students. Some participants described their schools as professional learning communities, such as argued for by Le Cornu (2010) with a focus on improving student learning outcomes. However, the

data did not communicate a sense of collective responsibility for learning to be a teacher of teaching.

Scholars are beginning to argue that providing an educative experience for pre-service teachers in their school-based time is greater than each individual teacher's responsibility and should rest within an explicit school policy and discourse (Le Cornu, 2015). The promise of, and aspirations for, professional learning communities to influence the discourse around learning to teach and improving teaching (Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017) remains partial when teachers' work with pre-service teachers remains a side task (Jaspers et al., 2014).

In Australia the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership's (AITSL) 'Highly Accomplished' and 'Lead' standards seek to establish that being a mentor teacher is far more than a side task. As such they purport to provide a framework to support learning to be a teacher of teaching. These standards are an extrapolation from the description of the proficient teacher and communicate an assumption that expert teachers will inevitably be successful mentor teachers. This assumption has been strongly contested (Ambrosetti, 2014; Bullough, 2005; Hobson et al., 2009; Le Cornu, 2012). Timperley (2001, p. 122) provides the observation that school placements require "a high level of skills that cannot be assumed". However, these skills are frequently assumed as is evidenced by this study and much of the scholarly literature.

The Lead teacher standards perhaps overly imply a destination for individual teachers while these participants emphasised a relational journey of deliberate learning about teaching over time. The section of the standards most relevant to this study indicates that the Lead teacher will "Initiate collaborative relationships … to provide quality opportunities and placements for pre-service teachers" (Australian

Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2011Descriptor 6.2). The Findings chapters indicate that what is involved in meeting this standard - and the "relational capacities" (Le Cornu, 2015, p. 14) that are involved - is far more complex and nuanced than implied by the standard. For instance, the standards, by implication, downplay the emotional nature of this work and the way the affective is intricately interconnected with the cognitive.

Placing pre-service teachers with more time in schools will not necessarily mean that teachers, even guided by 'Lead' teacher standards, will see themselves as a teacher of teaching. As demonstrated by this PiTE case study, policy that advocates for more time in schools often "belies the complexity and difficulty involved" (Martin, 1996, p. 42). In some cases schools view yearlong placements, such as the PiTE program, as a recruitment opportunity, a time for "talent spotting" (White et al., 2010, p. 184). The policy focus at all levels needs to be on these placements as opportunities for the learning of all involved. This means providing a professional learning framework around any internship program that explicitly conceptualises it as part of the continuum of teacher learning. Central should be attention to relational responsibility.

7.8 Synthesis and Summary

The research question asked: *How did the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?* These participants understood teaching pre-service teachers to teach as being relational, intentional and reflective. In broad terms this answer accords with much that is in the extant literature. However, the nuances and layers provided from the mentor teachers' perspectives enrich this answer by providing access to the attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions that not only

facilitate an educative experience for pre-service teachers but work to constrain and limit it. These insights are essential for enhancing and improving this crucial aspect of initial teacher education.

Importantly, this study provides an analysis of the responsibility for relationships revealed through the data and informed by the socio-cultural and constructivist insights provided by the concept relational responsibility (Gergen, 2009). By listening to the voices of these participants we can see how the assumption of relational responsibility, as illustrated in Figure 7.1, is core to being relational, being intentional and being reflective in the mentor teacher role. This analysis helps us understand that relational responsibility, making care for the relationship primary in order to sustain the co-creation of meaning, is fundamental.

The centrality of the co-creation of meaning emphasises that, when we talk about the importance of the mentor pre-service teacher relationship, more is meant than emotional support and the provision of technical advice. Co-creating meaning in this study reveals layers of learning in relationship. Firstly, for these mentor teachers was the centrality of student learning and assessing student progress against learning intentions. This was the focus for many of the reflective conversations. Next is the learning of the pre-service teacher, an adult who is nevertheless positioned as a learner supported by a mentor teacher who, as purposeful observer, listener and co-constructor of meaning, takes a learning and pedagogical stance to their mentoring role. The further layer is the discourse of the school community and this will not only shape the priorities referred to above but also communicate the value placed on the mentor teacher role within the school. These are the ingredients that together support a teacher in assuming relational responsibility as a teacher of teaching.

This study demonstrated outstanding examples of educative mentoring. However, what this PiTE case study also allows us to understand is that not all the mentor teachers understood their mentoring role as one that invited them to be relationally, intentionally and reflectively educative. That is, within the same broad state context, and within similar and even within the same school, there were variations. It is these variations that provide us with insights into possible barriers to turning aspirations for the mentoring role into wider lived experience.

Some participants enabled us to understand how being an educative mentor can be exemplified in the local context and hence what being a teacher of teaching can look like in some Tasmanian schools. These mentor teachers valued the experience of being a mentor teacher, embraced the challenges, were persistently purposeful and pedagogically resourceful in their mentoring practice. At core to their professional practice as mentors they were relationally responsible. This teaches us how critical attention to relational expertise is to establishing mutuality in the relationship, intentionally scaffolding the gradual release of classroom responsibility and consciously attending to the language in mediating reflective conversations.

However for some other participants, persistent and superficial slogans and unexamined beliefs about how someone learns to teach appeared to act as barriers to the assumption of relational responsibility. The connotations of the terms used shaped and limited the potential of how some mentor teachers thought about their role. Firstly, there was the persistent belief that we are fundamentally independent and separate individuals and hence an adult learner can and should take individual responsibility for learning to teach. Secondly, was the confidence that ‘experience’ could be an adequate teacher and that it followed that “teaching can’t be taught.” Recognising the subtle ways these beliefs limit some teachers to a role as supportive

nurturers is vital for thinking how to facilitate good teachers to become more educative in the mentor teacher role.

This study provides a further important insight if mentoring pre-service teachers is to provide an educative experience. By placing the emphasis on relational responsibility, this study alerts us to the demanding nature of the one-on-one work of teaching a pre-service teacher to teach within the context of a busy classroom. The relational agency and relational expertise required are significant and for the most part taken for granted when this role is assigned. Being a teacher of teaching asks a teacher to be skilled with language, manage emotions and challenge the cognitive, all frequently improvised in the moment. As one mentor teacher expressed it "it's really a different layer to teach a teacher how to teach" (Claire).

The following chapter concludes this thesis. It addresses some key implications that arise from the data and how the findings have informed the purposes established at the commencement of the study. The chapter concludes by making a number of recommendations that emerge from the discussion of the findings.

Chapter 8

Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

This final chapter presents conclusions and recommendations for initial teacher education policy, mentor teacher professional learning, possible support structures for mentor teachers and future research. These conclusions and recommendations arise from the analysis provided through the Findings chapters and the synthesis of the research informed by the extant literature in the previous chapter. They are presented within the context of the limitations of the study that were outlined in Chapter 3 and are further commented on in this chapter.

This interpretive case study has confirmed much of the research on mentoring pre-service teachers reported in the extant literature in Chapter 2. However, it was noted that the perspectives of mentor teachers continue to be under-researched. By listening to the voices of these participants this study provides insights into what can be achieved and what must be learned about mentoring pre-service teachers. In particular the data from these participants emphasised the organising concept of

relational responsibility (Gergen, 2009) in enacting the three themes of being relational, intentional and reflective as derived from the data.

8.2 Final Thoughts

The overarching purpose for this study was to investigate how the PiTE mentor teachers understood their mentoring role. The aim was to deepen an understanding about what the role entails and what is involved in becoming a teacher of teaching. A number of conclusions can be made from the interviews with the PiTE mentor teachers through the extensive and richly detailed interview data they provided.

The findings overwhelmingly endorse the significance, complexity and potential of the mentor teacher role. At the heart of the role is the challenge of a relationship with another adult while teaching them to become a teacher, and at the same time ensuring the learning progress of a class of students. The voices of these mentor teachers communicate the sense that this role needs to be better understood and its position in a school, and in initial teacher education, reconceptualised and re-framed.

This study used the term 'mentor teacher' to name the role of teachers who work with pre-service teachers. This is generally the label given to this role in the extant literature. The research question: *How do the mentor teachers in this study understand teaching pre-service teachers to teach?* implied that participants would see the role as one that required them to be teachers of teaching. As reported in the Findings some did, some did not while many were at varying stages of a journey towards becoming a teacher of teaching.

The data suggests that re-conceptualising the role name as school-based teacher educator, while being informed of the challenges (E. White et al., 2015; Yendol-Hoppey, 2007), has the potential to contribute to a process that will build and reinforce understanding about the educative aspirations the role requires. It further suggests a requirement for a more formal job description that communicates clarity about expectations and responsibilities. While a change to the nomenclature by itself changes little, it nevertheless signals an important message: this role should not be understood as a "side-task" (Jaspers et al., 2014) that requires no specific capabilities other than being a registered teacher. Rather it is a role that requires particular educational expertise.

In Australia a change to the role name would be greatly supported if it were accompanied by work conducted by the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). The data suggests that the role of school-based teacher educator needs to be prioritised by AITSL through the development of standards that specifically address the complex demands of this role. That is any developing standards respect the advice from these participants that being a mentor teacher is another whole layer and "a full role in itself" (Adrienne). The data indicates that the mentor teacher role should be distinguished from one that is simply an extension of being a proficient teacher to what AITSL calls a Lead teacher. The challenge of working one to one with an adult learner, together with being responsible for the learning of a class of children, while noted as complex by scholars (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006; Jaspers et al., 2014), seems underestimated by the present AITSL Lead teacher standards.

Answering the research question strongly argues for the critical role of relational responsibility. This in turn invites consideration that an essential component

of a discrete set of standards to describe the mentor teacher role would include a significant focus on the relational aspects of the role and the ways in which they are foundational for learning in and from classroom experience. Furthermore, any standards document, however improved must be continually mediated by the teachers whose mentoring practice the standards seek to guide.

The findings also invite consideration that the mentor teacher role would be supported by a curriculum that outlines key priorities and mentoring processes for the school-based component of initial teacher education. Such a school-based initial teacher education curriculum should be guided by mentor teacher thinking and could be determined from the data supplied by these participants. They assisted our understanding that a learning to teach curriculum relies on several factors. Firstly, mentor teachers must take relational responsibility for their pre-service teacher as a learner, and, in their relationship, view themselves as a mutual learner. Secondly, the data suggests they should have an understanding of how experience in the classroom can be educative and their role in "assisting performance" (Feiman-Nemser & Beasley, 1997). Thirdly, mentor teachers should understand the importance of building meaning by making their thinking visible through conversations about student learning. Finally, mentor teachers must be able to challenge the thinking and practices of their pre-service teachers, acknowledging that these words underscore the emotional and relational components involved. Nevertheless, it is possible to translate the PiTE experience (for instance extrapolated from the synthesis provided by Figure 7.1) together with insights from scholars, into curriculum documents that enhance an understanding of expectations for the school-based time and provide detailed guidance for enacting the mentoring role in the local context.

However, the data emphasised that while guidelines and support documents, including insights gathered from educators and scholars (for instance Danielson, 2007; Feiman-Nemser, 2001b) were valuable, they also had their limitations. The data revealed that some mentor teachers did not use the support materials provided during the PiTE program. Primarily what was required, were mentor teachers demonstrating intelligent action (Rodgers, 2002a) and relational responsibility that sustains the process of creating meaning (Gergen, 2009) with their pre-service teacher. Intelligent action implies mentor teachers are involved in on-going learning about the mentoring role and are supported in discourse about what the role entails. As was noted in the previous chapter, being a teacher of teaching not only requires planned interventions but also principled and informed improvisation in the teaching moment. In addition to consulting documents, be they possible standards or a curriculum, teachers undertaking the mentor teacher role require minds that enable them to interpret and analyse experience from within (Ellis, 2010). The conceptualisation captured by Figure 7.1 provides a summary version of a framework that could be used to guide the curriculum thinking of mentor teachers. This would provide both a conceptual and practical focus for their professional learning support.

Hence, a major conclusion from this study is that professional learning for teachers undertaking this role is critical. It is well documented that being a mentor teacher may not come naturally (Ambrosetti, 2014; Orland, 2001) and that "educative mentoring is a practice that must be learned" (Feiman-Nemser, 2012, p. 248). Nevertheless scholars continue to observe that most teachers take on the mentoring role with little or no training (Gareis & Grant, 2014; Hoffman et al., 2015). This was the case for the majority of the PiTE mentor teachers and the data indicates that prior training would have been beneficial, particularly in the first year of the program.

The data strongly suggests that in addition to any provision prior to accepting the mentor teacher role, concurrent professional learning structures are extremely important. This is particularly the case when the core nature of relational responsibility, interpreted through the voices of the mentor teachers, helps us appreciate that for many mentor teachers having the kind of presence required to teach teaching is likely to require ongoing, timely, and even emotional support. Professional learning structures are required that safely allow for assumptions, beliefs and preconceptions, such as have been documented in this study, to be challenged. Furthermore, concurrent professional learning provides opportunities for raising and debriefing the challenges that arise in mentoring, such as the occasional confronting relational situations referred to in the data and the literature (Hamel & Jaasko-Fisher, 2011; Hastings, 2010).

From this ongoing provision specific professional learning might be negotiated to address issues particularly those in the relational dimensions. These might include matters that emerged through the data such as demonstrating empathy, using vulnerability to develop trust, observing practice, using evidence, listening actively, when and how to intervene and having difficult conversations.

The Findings indicated that socio-cultural and constructivist thinking informed the intelligent action of some mentor teachers. As reported in this study some, and in particular those mentor teachers teaching in the infant areas, talked about "scaffolding" and providing a "gradual release of responsibility". They appeared to be transferring these concepts from their understanding of student learning to inform their understanding of their mentoring role. The data suggested that these concepts contributed to orienting them into taking relational responsibility for someone learning to teach. The infant teachers' use of these concepts invites consideration that

mentors more widely could benefit from understanding these and other socio- cultural and constructivist concepts such as providing for the "legitimate peripheral participation" (Lave & Wenger, 1991) of pre-service teachers with consciously chosen tasks that are within the reach of the novice because readiness and the "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86) has been assessed.

A practical entry point for developing this conceptual understanding might be to facilitate mentor teachers in all grades to transfer insights from how they understand student learning and their teaching practices to their thinking about provision for their adult learner (Hoffman et al., 2015). Engaging with this thinking invites consideration of what is involved in making the classroom experience educative for a pre-service teacher. Connecting student learning, socio-cultural and constructivist theory and pre-service teacher learning to teach in a professional learning context has the potential to inform the development of a conceptual framework with relational responsibility as the core concept such as that represented by Figure 7.1.

A further conclusion is that the concept 'relational responsibility' should be incorporated into pre-service initial teacher courses as well as in professional learning for mentor teachers. In answering the research question the data showed that relational responsibility was core to establishing mutuality, intentionally sequencing the learning and facilitating reflective conversations that mediated understanding and provided timely feedback. However relational mentoring and establishing connectivity relies on "both parties operating from a self-in-relation stance" (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007, p. 383). Hence, the concept needs to be introduced to pre-service teachers as well as mediated in connection to the lived mentoring experience of teachers. Hamel and Jaasko-Fisher (2011, p. 441) talk about needing a new language

"not simply to name reality" but as "a tool for continuing the dialogue". The concept relational responsibility is such a tool.

A final conclusion is that, in addition to providing professional learning, other support structures and systems are important for ensuring the mentoring role is an educative one. Support structures and systems might take several forms. Firstly systems of support and commitment must be demonstrated through each school community. Mentoring pre-service teachers takes place in communities of practice and the social and professional systems of each school. Rather than being the individual responsibility of a teacher, school staff should take a collective responsibility for the placement of pre-service teachers.

This study suggests that mentoring pre-service teachers, particularly over a year, has the potential to impact the improvement of teaching practice for some mentor teachers. This impact was particularly experienced through the benefit of becoming more focused on providing rationales for teaching decisions that involved thinking deeply about moving the learning of their students "forward". Furthermore, many mentor teachers commented on how they were enhancing their capacity to support the improvement of teaching more generally in their school community. This developing expertise appears to be underutilised by school communities.

Hence, school-based policy should explicitly value the learning of pre-service teachers and grasp the potential the role has for school-based professional learning. This means taking on what Elmore (2004) calls a "controversial idea: that schools should become places dedicated to adult and student learning" (p. 223). An educative experience for pre-service teachers requires a school-based discourse that questions, learns and values the placement of pre-service teachers and the allocation and on-going professional learning of mentor teachers. Furthermore, at a more pragmatic

level, valuing this role and its potential in the school requires, as the data demonstrated, an improved allocation of release time.

Secondly, support structures and systems are likely to include partnership arrangements between ITE providers and school systems and/or schools, such as that entered into for PiTE. Indeed the data suggests that there needs to be a multi-pronged linking of ITE providers with schools, mentors and employers. This is needed to provide coherent, connected and sustained support that facilitates communication between ITE providers and mentor teachers such that links between the course curriculum and the school-based curriculum are valued and made explicit. The data demonstrated that, unfortunately, this level of making connections was accidental and partial. Internationally scholars (Allen et al., 2013; Breault, 2013; Elstad, 2010; Haigh & Ward, 2004; Zeichner, 2010) note how challenging and even fragile these partnerships can be.

Partnership arrangements are also the context for determining how much time is allocated to the school-based aspect of initial teacher education. These participants asserted their support for "immersion" (Chloe), for internships where pre-service teachers experience yearlong placements in schools. This was viewed as particularly important for the development of trusting relationships, particularly with students. Time was needed to understand students, their learning needs, the challenges involved with particular students and how to "move their learning forward." The Australian policy context (TEMAG, 2015; PTR Consulting Pt. Ltd., 2018) communicates concern that pre-service teachers need to learn how their teaching impacts student learning. Without adequate time and an informed focus on relationships and learning, demonstrating impact might become just a technical exercise.

What follows from these conclusions are eight recommendations. They are provided to invite both discussion and action at national, ITE, school system and school levels with the aim of improving the role of teachers who assume relational responsibility for teaching pre-service teachers to teach. The recommendations emerge from answering the research question informed by the extant literature.

8.3 Recommendations for Future Action

It is acknowledged that some of these recommendations are easier to address than others and that all require the combined commitment of a number of stakeholders. Some could be enacted through negotiation at the local school and school system levels while others require partnerships with ITE providers and even longer term planning and implementation at the national level. Taken together the recommendations provide more explicit recognition for the role of teachers who teach pre-service teachers to teach in the school-based component of their initial teacher education. The recommendations arise from the Findings reported in this study.

Recommendation 1

Improve professional learning provision for mentor teachers

Professional learning should be provided for mentor teachers that is both prior to and concurrent with their acceptance of the mentoring role. This might take the form of an award based course provided by the ITE institution (as is the case in some jurisdictions) or be school based or coordinated between a number of schools. Concurrent provision, for instance through learning to mentor networks, should provide a safe environment for sharing and challenging assumptions and beliefs about learning to teach; address the capabilities implied in taking relational responsibility; negotiate and co-construct a conceptual framework or curriculum (for instance using

the diagrammatic representation of Figure 7.1 as a starting point) informed by socio-cultural constructivist theories of learning.

Recommendation 2

Develop a school-based ITE curriculum framework

The diagrammatic conception of Figure 7.1 and the detail provided by PiTE participants can be used as a basis for developing a curriculum framework for the school-based component of ITE. Such a framework needs to be specific enough to guide mentor teachers in the teaching of teaching but also sensitive to the need to be flexible for the different levels of schooling. In Australia this work would also need to be congruent with AITSL graduate standards. Developing a school-based ITE curriculum framework could be the focus for professional learning support and the basis for co-constructing a curriculum specific to each school. Relational responsibility should be core to this curriculum framework.

Recommendation 3

School communities take a collective responsibility for the placement of pre-service teachers.

The local arrangements for placements have historically been between the ITE provider and individual teachers albeit through the school principal. However, this data confirms the view that placements should be the collective responsibility of all staff rather than being treated as an additional task for some individual teachers. The learning of pre-service teachers should be understood as a school responsibility and explicitly acknowledged as the first stage of the professional learning journey of being a teacher. Furthermore, teachers who take on the role as mentor teacher, particularly if in the future they are understood to be school-based teacher educators, should be supported to act as leaders of learning and pedagogy within their school communities.

Recommendation 4

Improve the priority given to the place of relationships in learning to teach in the initial teacher education curriculum.

The data emphasised the importance of relationships as foundational for student learning and educative mentoring. The pre-service teaching curriculum should include the capacity to support pre-service teachers learning relational skills and to support their orientation to working in a mutual learning capacity with their school-based teacher educator.

Recommendation 5

Invite mentor teachers to shape the continual improvement of the school-based component of initial teacher education.

Partnership arrangements between ITE providers and schools and school systems should explicitly seek the insights from mentor teachers. The data indicated that classroom teachers taking on the mentor teacher role did not always see themselves working in partnership with the ITE provider. The mantle of school-based teacher educator (see recommendation 8) implies building a respectful partnership at this level to shape the continual improvement of the provision of the school-based component of initial teacher education.

Recommendation 6

Mentor teachers teach pre-service teachers to teach over a year in the final year of their ITE course

Placing pre-service teachers for yearlong internship is common practice in many jurisdictions. This is generally not the case in Tasmania. These participants communicated their belief that such placements respect the time it takes to build relationships with students and learning how to use these relationships as the

foundation for learning. Nevertheless, placing pre-service teachers with more time in schools will not mean that teachers will necessarily see themselves as a teacher of teaching. The policy focus at all levels needs to be on these placements as opportunities for the learning of all involved and not simply a recruitment initiative. This means providing a professional learning framework around any internship program that explicitly conceptualises it as part of the continuum of teacher professional learning.

Recommendation 7

Develop a set of standards for the role of school-based teacher educator.

In Australia there are a number of institutions that might exercise leadership in this regard: the Faculty of Education in universities; the departments of education (for mentor teachers in their constituency); other ITE providers; and the state teacher registration authorities who have jurisdictional responsibility for teacher registration. The Australian Institute of School Leadership (AITSL) would likely play a coordinating role or might consider this work as an important and timely addition to their existing teacher standards.

A set of standards would recognise that being a mentor teacher is a full role in itself. These standards should be more that another list to be checked off and should be detailed enough to guide the specificity of capabilities required in working one-on-one with an adult who is learning to teach. An essential component would be a greater focus on the relational aspects of the role and the ways in which they are foundational for learning in and from classroom experience. If the role title were changed to school-based teacher educator (see below) there would be implications for standards to note how this role carries responsibilities for interconnection with the ITE provider.

Recommendation 8

Change the role name to 'school-based teacher educator'.

The role name should be changed from colleague teacher (the local nomenclature) or mentor teacher to school-based teacher educator. Meaning will need to be brought to the name at the ITE and local school level, preferably within the context of enhancing the value of the role in each school's cultural discourse.

8.4 Limitations

The limitations to this study were commented on in detail in *Chapter 3 Methodology*. In summary, interpretations and conclusions may have been impacted by the nature of this PiTE case study: the kind of schools involved (high ENI); the collaborative orientation of these schools; the additional funding PiTE provided; the fact that participants self-selected and the retrospective nature of the research. The possibility of a *Hawthorne effect* was noted in Chapter 3. Nevertheless the findings and conclusions outlined above resonate with much of the international literature.

Two limitations invite consideration for further research. Firstly, this study is viewed through the lens of one side of the relationship – the mentor teacher's. The pre-service teacher's understanding of the mentoring experience was beyond the scope of this study. This was noted in chapter 3 as one limitation of this PiTE case study. Given the emphasis on relationships and the centrality of relational responsibility that emerged from the data there is some irony in this. Hence there is a need for further research focused specifically on relational responsibility that involves both mentors and pre-service teachers.

Secondly, in order to continue to investigate how mentor teachers understand their role as being teachers of teaching, future research needs to include observation

of mentoring practice and the capacity to interrogate mentoring conversations. This implies participatory research where mentor teacher and researcher are co-learners and co-producers of the insights that emerge. Research that involves the participation of the researcher in the acts of mentoring, observing and listening to mentoring practice, requires significant amounts of trust and confidence in the researcher's expertise. This study underlines the critical nature of what remains to be better understood, namely the role of relational responsibility in the mentoring process.

8.5 Future Research

Suggestion 1

Investigate how key participants perceive the concept 'relational responsibility'.

The Findings reported here highlight the key role of relational responsibility and suggest strongly that it would be worthwhile to explore the concept from the perspective of both mentor and pre-service teachers. This would allow the researcher to compare and contrast perspectives. Furthermore, if both mentor teachers and their pre-service teachers were to openly co-construct the meaning of relational responsibility, resources and pedagogy could be developed in order to more effectively address issues of initiative, expectations, pre-conceptions, and deeply held attitudes and beliefs about how one learns to teach, together with how one develops and sustains relationships in school settings.

Suggestion 2

In partnership with mentor teachers inquire into three aspects of teaching pre-service teachers to teach.

The Findings suggest three priorities for the next phase of this research in Tasmania. Each of these suggestions for research could build specifically on this study and invite selected mentor teachers, positioned as co-researchers, to assist in going deeper into these aspects of teaching pre-service teachers to teach informed by the mentor teacher's lived experience.

The first priority would be an investigation into the relational capabilities involved in assuming relational responsibility. This exploration of relational responsibility might include the relational component of mediating conversations, for instance what is involved in learning to listen or the relational demands of making an intervention with a pre-service teacher's practice.

The second priority would further investigate the implications of making a focus on student learning central for pre-service teachers in the school-based component of their initial teacher education course. What is involved, particularly over a year, in learning to "move the students forward'? This inquiry would gather insights from the perspective of both mentor and pre-service teachers.

The third priority would research what it is some mentor teachers learn through mentoring pre-service teachers that positions them as potential pedagogical leaders in their school communities. An inquiry such as this could build explicitly on this study and explore in what ways teaching pre-service teachers to teach might become the hub of an improvement of teaching strategy within a school.

These suggestions for future research would be negotiated with the support of schools and school system facilitators and/or ITE researchers. They will require a respectful

and trusting research partnership between mentor teachers and facilitating researchers external to the school. As such these research suggestions would move beyond self-reports on the part of mentor teachers and involve participatory ethnographic inquiry by a facilitator/researcher in partnership with mentor teachers. Furthermore, these suggestions would encourage mentor teachers to undertake action research that would further the scholarship of their mentor teacher role.

8.6 Thesis Summary

This interpretive case study has investigated how a particular cohort of mentor teachers understood teaching pre-service teachers to teach. These mentor teachers were participants in a partnership program (PiTE) between the department of education and the local university in the Australian state of Tasmania. The aim was to learn more about the mentor teachers' lived experience, and thus provide insights to inform policy and practice in the school-based component of initial teacher education. The review of the extant literature into mentoring pre-service teachers, and specifically educative mentoring, confirmed the sense that the voices of mentor teachers, their perspectives and understandings about what is entailed in teaching pre-service teachers to teach, is largely under-researched. Thus listening to their voices was deemed to be essential to describe and map the field before making recommendations for improvement.

It is clear from this study that many of these mentor teachers demonstrated, through being relational, intentional and reflective, the aspirations expressed through much of the literature on educative mentoring. For instance, some communicated their emphasis on teaching for understanding, an intentional sequencing of the pre-service

teachers' learning to teach and an orientation to establishing a mutual learning partnership in their classrooms. Some became intentional teachers of teaching.

The mentor teachers' voices also revealed the nuanced ways in which language shaped beliefs, attitudes and subsequently actions. Sometimes the full potential for being a teacher of teaching was not realised. When this was the case the data revealed the complex subtleties of interpretation and negotiation of meaning making involved in becoming a teacher of pre-service teachers. Coming to understand themselves as teachers of teaching was a learning journey and a process of becoming.

Central to becoming a teacher of teaching was the capacity of mentor teachers for relational responsibility and the extent to which this was consciously present through prioritising relationships, demonstrating intentionality and emphasising reflection. That is, relational responsibility was proposed as a core organising concept for being a teacher of teaching.

The insights from this research invite consideration that the potential of the mentor teacher role is largely unfulfilled in our schools and in initial teacher education more generally. Mentoring pre-service teachers can contribute to a teacher's sense that they are improving as teachers. The role also has the potential to develop their understanding of the processes required to assist the other learn to teach. Becoming a teacher of teaching develops pedagogical expertise that might be harnessed for leadership roles that guide the continuing learning and improvement of teaching in schools.

Listening to the voices of these mentor teachers emphasises the relational responsibility involved in this work and invites consideration of how much more there is to learn with and from mentor teachers. The model provided in Figure 7.1 provides a foundation to facilitate this learning. Guided by the participants in this study eight

recommendations for discussion and future action have been made. These are designed to better describe and professionally enhance the mentor teacher role and realise the role's potential in initial teacher education. This case study also makes two broad suggestions for future research.

The future of the mentor teacher role is critical. It is at this point, in a classroom with a mentor teacher, that an aspiring teacher takes their first steps within the teaching profession. This thesis contributes to an understanding that mentoring pre-service teachers is complex, sophisticated, relational and educational work. In understanding themselves as teachers of teaching mentor teachers must understand how to establish connections, provide an educative experience and through reflective conversations mediate and co-construct meaning about learning and teaching. At the core of this vital professional role is understanding and intentionally enacting relational responsibility.

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Appendix A

Acronyms and Abbreviations Used in this Thesis

Initials	Name in full
AEU	Australian Education Union
AITSL	Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership
B. Ed	Bachelor of Education
DoE	Department of Education, Tasmania
ENI	Educational Needs Index
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
K	Kindergarten
M. Teach.	Master of Teaching
PiTE	Partnerships in Teaching Excellence Program
SES	Social Economic Status
TQNP	Teacher Quality National Program. The full title was *Smarter Schools: Improving Teacher Quality*

Appendix B

Participants' Consent Form

Teaching pre-service teachers to teach: Exploring how mentors and colleague teachers understand the teaching and mentoring of pre-service teachers

This consent form is for Partnership in Teaching Excellence (PiTE) mentors and colleague teachers 2009 to 2013

1. I agree to take part in the research study named above.
2. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.
3. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
4. I understand that the study involves:

   a) the use of past PiTE documentation including notes of meetings.

   I agree to the use of meeting notes in this study.

   Yes ☐ No ☐

   b) interviews

   I am prepared to participate in an interview.

   Yes ☐ No ☐

   c) focus group meetings

   I am prepared to participate in a focus group meeting

   Yes ☐ No ☐
5. I understand that participation involves no foreseeable risk(s).
6. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania's premises for five years from the publication of the study results, and will then be destroyed unless I give permission for my data to be shared through the Australian National Data Service for the purpose of improving initial teacher education.

   I agree to have my study data shared.

   Yes ☐ No ☐
7. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

8. I understand that the researcher(s) will maintain confidentiality and that any information I supply to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the research. I understand that my contribution to a focus group discussion will be requested to remain confidential but cannot be guaranteed.
9. I understand that the results of the study will be published and that while every effort will be made to ensure that I cannot be identified as a participant it is impossible to guarantee this.
10. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any effect.

    I understand that it may not be possible to withdraw data already provided in interviews or during a focus group.

Participant's name:

_____

Participant's signature:

_____

Date: _____

Statement by Investigator

☐ I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Investigator's name:

_____

Investigator's signature:

_____

Date: _____

Appendix C

Information Sheet for Participants

Teaching pre-service teachers to teach: exploring how mentors and colleague teachers understand the teaching and mentoring of pre-service teachers.

This information sheet is for educators who have been involved with the Partnerships in Teaching Excellence (PiTE) program as mentors and colleague teachers during 2009 to 2013.

INVITATION

Ruth Radford, Dr. Kerry Howells and Professor John Williamson invite you to be involved in this research study "Teaching pre-service teachers to teach: exploring how mentors and colleague teachers understand the teaching and mentoring of pre-service teachers". This research grows out of our shared involvement in the Partnerships in Teaching Excellence (PiTE) program and is being conducted by me, Ruth Radford, in partial fulfilment of a Masters/PhD degree under the supervision of Dr. Kerry Howells and Professor John Williamson, Faculty of Education, UTAS. The study will investigate what you learned during the PiTE program as you took on your mentoring and/or colleague teacher role.
You should note that I am sending you this invitation in my role as a student, and completely separate from my role as manager of the PiTE program as I have now retired from the Department of Education.

What is the purpose of this study?

The aim of this study is to understand the perspective of teachers who take on a yearlong role as teachers of teaching. The outcomes of this understanding is intended to inform the guidance and supervision of pre-service teachers and early career teachers in a context that is more intentional about building quality supervision of novice teachers.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate because you were a mentor or colleague teacher involved with the PiTE program. Your involvement with this study will draw on your considerable expertise developed through your extended involvement with guiding the learning of pre-service teachers in the context of the opportunities and challenges provided through their additional time in schools. Your participation is voluntary.

What will I be asked to do?

If relevant you will be asked to provide permission for me to use notes of meetings with mentors and colleague teachers, that were collected in my role as PiTE manager over the period 2009 to 2013, as documents in this study. You will be asked to participate in an interview early in 2014. Later in the year you will be invited to participate in a focus group. Each of these will be no longer than one hour in duration. All interviews and focus group meetings will be scheduled in negotiation with you in terms of time and venue. Unfortunately due to financial restrictions I am not able to provide relief for the time spent in the interview or focus group.
Questions in the interview and focus groups will focus on themes that have emerged during our work over the past five years. Permission will be sought to audio-record interviews and

focus group discussions and transcripts will be provided to participants for review and correction. All quotations from particular people used in the study will be reported anonymously.

Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

The intention of this study is to enhance the capacity of all participants with their ability to support the improvement of teaching practice. Specifically the study will contribute to our understanding of how to better mentor pre-service and early career teachers – and teach about teaching. It will also inform the professional learning provided to teachers who take on mentoring roles for pre-service and early career teachers.

Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

No risks are envisaged. If, however, you were to feel uncomfortable or do not wish any of your responses noted you will be given the opportunity to read over transcripts and make any changes you see fit.

What if I change my mind during or after the study?

Participants are free to withdraw at any time during the study and can do so without providing an explanation. It may not be possible to withdraw data already provided in interviews or during a focus group.

What will happen to the information when this study is over?

The data will be kept in the first instance for the years it takes to complete the study (envisaged as three years) and for a further five years once the study has been completed. At this point it can be securely disposed of. However, it is possible that the data and findings from this research might be useful for others researching ways to improve initial teacher education. To support this research the data can be shared through the Australian National Data Service. You are asked for permission to share your data in this way.
All data will be treated in a confidential manner. Conversations in meetings or discussions in focus groups will be requested to remain confidential but cannot be guaranteed.

How will the results of the study be published?

The research will be published in journal articles, the thesis, a report to the DoE, conference papers, and a book. You will not be identifiable in any of the publications. However, because of the small number of schools involved and the time many of you have been working together over the five years, it may be possible to correctly attribute quotations. While every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality and anonymity it cannot be guaranteed.

What if I have questions about this study?

Please contact Kerry Howells by email Kerry.howells@utas.edu.au
"This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +61 3 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. Please quote ethics reference number **H13871**.
This information sheet is for you to keep. If you are prepared to participate in this study please sign a the written consent form also attached to this email and return it to Ruth.radford@utas.edu.au **.**

Appendix D

Participants' Details

Name	School sector	Male/ Female	Mentor/LMT	Age	Years teaching	PiTE Years
Adrienne	High	F	MT	58	35	1
Alan	Primary	M	MT	27	6	4
Barbara	Primary	F	MT	29	7	1
Carmel	Primary	F	MT	26	5	1
Charles	Primary	M	MT	30	7	1
Chloe	Primary	F	MT & LMT	57	32	5
Christine	Primary	F	MT	30	5	3
Claire	High	F	LMT	32	10	2 ½
Diane	Primary	F	LMT	42	21	1
Elizabeth	High	F	MT	29	5	3
Harry	Primary	M	LMT	34	12	1
Jackie	High	F	MT	33	10	2
Jill	High	F	MT	59	36	2
Joe	High	M	MT & LMT	42	20	5
John	High	M	MT	30	9	3
Judy	Primary	F	MT & LMT	49	26	2
Katrina	High	F	MT	45	21	1
Kristina	Primary	F	MT	42	20	1
Laura	Primary	F	MT	47	25	1
Lisa	High	F	LMT	50	27	2
Lucy	Primary	F	MT & LMT	51	30	3
Marcus	High	M	MT	35	10	1
Martin	High	M	MT	32	9 ½	3
Miles	High	M	MT	39	16	1
Patricia	Primary	F	MT	52	30	1 ½
Rita	Primary	F	LMT	35	13	2
Stephanie	High	F	MT & LMT	32	8	3
Steve	High	M	MT	34	12	2
Susan	High	F	MT & LMT	59	37	2
Tess	High	F	LMT	40	17	3

High: 16	Female: 21	Lead Mentors: 12	Age 25 – 35: 13	Years teaching 5-10yrs: 12
Primary: 14	Male: 9	CT's: 19	Age 36 - 45: 5	Years teaching 11-20yrs: 7
			Age 46 – 56: 2	Years teaching 21-30yrs: 7
			Age 56+: 3	Years teaching 31+ yrs: 4

MT = Mentor Teacher LMT = Lead Mentor Teacher

Appendix E

Interview Instrument

Tell me, how long have you been teaching and how did you come to take on the mentor /colleague teacher role?

Tell me about your experience of being a PiTE mentor/colleague teacher?

What kinds of things do you draw on to teach about teaching?

> What kind of experiences or training have you had in learning how to mentor/ teach about teaching

What do you think pre-service teachers need to know and understand about teaching, and be able to do?

How did you go about teaching these things? How do you decide where to focus?

In what ways were you able to make connections with their university course work?

> What value did you place on their inquiry project assignment and how did this inquiry work play out in your classroom?

What kind of mentoring or teaching do you do about relationship building with a) staff b) students; c) members of the community such as parents? How central is this to teaching?

What kinds of values, beliefs or attitudes are important for the colleague teacher and mentoring role? Does the mentor have a role in imparting these to the pre-service teacher? If so how would they do this?

What are the knowledge, skills and understandings that are required to be an accomplished teacher of teaching?

How did you go about focusing the pre-service teachers on student learning? What insights did you get and what were the challenges?

What insights have you had about your own teaching from being a mentor/colleague teacher? How do these insights play out in your mentor/colleague teacher role?

What are the main things that guide your assessment of pre-service teachers?

> What were you looking for to judge a pre-service teacher's progress over time?
> What did you believe to be evidence of fitness to teach?

What were the challenges involved for you in taking on a mentor and or colleague teacher role?
What do you think might be the challenges for teachers who are reluctant to take on this role?
What do you see as the possible challenges for teachers taking on this role into the future?

Do you think there are some things you still have to learn about teaching pre-service teachers to teach? If so, what are they, and what would be the most effective way for you to learn about this?

Do you have anything you want to add that we have not talked about?

Appendix F

Extracts From Analysis Journal, and NVivo Project Log and Memos as Evidence of Emerging Thinking Around Coding, Themes and Theory Development

Analysis Journal

April 2016
Harry: This is a frustrating interview to read because Harry wants to make observations far wider than the specific focus on his mentoring experience in 2013 and also draws significantly from his current school experience.

May 2016
Need to look through interviews re this thread of discomfit with naming things up.

October 2016
Marcus: Got a strong sense at interview and even while reading this interview again months later that this teacher keen to impress me. I guess this comes through the number of times he wants to let me know that he is the grade coordinator and talks about the work he is doing at the time of the interview rather than focusing on working with his PiTE student – although this emphasis improves as the interview progresses.

October 2016
Laura: Another infant teacher with a very detailed sense of what is involved and capacity to talk about the detail. This was a new experience for Laura and also interesting because she had a student who might have been at risk. Laura had to re think her expectations and she talks about this at length. She gives considerable emphasis to understanding the pre-service teacher as a learner, as on a journey and how over the year she both supported and challenged her. … Are the infant teachers the best prepared to teach about teaching? Might their close observation of children transfer here or is it about being incredibly organized if you are teaching infants, or that the spread of abilities and the need to differentiate is heightened particularly if you have a kinder/prep?

Lucy: Relationships with children is again emphasized especially as a basis for children's learning. Lucy mentions the important part asking questions played in supporting the PiTE learning and again experience is central rather than the teacher telling. This is an important thread I think that is emerging more strongly with these readings but worth going back to re-look at how this has been represented earlier.

November 17th 2016
I began to consider relational responsibility as my core concept. How were the mentor teachers demonstrating a sense of responsibility for their pre-service teacher's learning to

teach? In what ways had they moved from a 'caught not taught' mentality? To what extent, and in what ways is the concept of relational responsibility central to supporting reflection and demonstrating a reciprocity in learning to teach? How might the insights that could be marshalled around this concept support a professional learning program for teachers taking pre-service teachers into their classrooms? Last night I played with a diagram to capture this thinking

November 30th 2016

Today I began to listen and re-read the interviews starting with Adrienne and Alan. I used the diagram of relationships between the concepts Relationships; Reflection; Relational responsibility and Reciprocity to guide my listening. I made very brief notes on an A3 sheet to capture overview of main emphases. What struck me here was that Adrienne emphasized the importance of learning from experience using the word quite a bit – but fairly general about what that experience looks like. She also indicated the pre-service teachers need to be proactive and let her know what they need to learn which suggests that she believes they come with more knowledge than perhaps they do. Alan, on the other hand, barely used the word experience but talked in detail about how he designs the learning from/in experience for his PiTE student. His own pre-service experience is significant here because he was left to "learn from experience" without guidance or feedback in his final prac and he is determined to do better by the pre-service teachers he has in his classroom. Experience and view of the pre-service teacher as a learner about teaching the significant ideas here although underpinned by relationships and encouraging reflection. Alan specifically talks about working in tandem so reciprocity important to him. While Adrienne talks about how responsible she feels in this role Alan does not use this word but demonstrates a high degree of responsible CT behaviour in sequencing the learning for his pre-service teacher.

December 16th [continuing task outlined above]

There continues to be an emphasis on assisting the pre-service teachers to be the thinker (rather than the mentor teacher as teller); thoughtfulness about sequencing the learning – of not overwhelming the learner; a consciousness about how to sequence; the importance of the detail, the little things that need to be noticed; how hard it is to see/notice the detail, how having a pre-service teacher enhances the teacher's own capacity to be aware of how they teach. Another factor is the significance of the school structure – in say establishing teams that meet, plan, learn together.

January 13th 2017

I have read the NVIVO node report summary for Reflection and then compared it to the original word based coding I did of the first 18 interviews. This reading and comparison made me think that I needed to look to see if I had coded separately for planning – as in the reflection node planning for teaching appeared to be one important context for thinking back as well as forwards and for helping the pre-service teachers think about the detail or the layers that at their stage of development need to be consciously considered when they are planning. Comparing the NVivo coding with my first word based attempt found both common elements and variance. The original was at times more broadly based and captured various aspects of the mentor teacher's support to improve thinking about teaching generally. The comparison made me decide to run coding on 'reflection/reflect', 'unpacking', debrief/debriefing' and 'thinking' to see the overlap of meaning (or variance) of these terms that seem to be being used synonomously. I also will read next the NVivo code summary for 'conversation' as this is the process that carries 'reflection'.

I started the week be reading Dewey's 'Experience and Education' and the teasing out of the concept experience and considering the principles of continuity and interaction will be very helpful. As I write this I am thinking of the two examples of 'chaos' after giving directions and the way the 'situation' provided a learning opportunity (for the mentor teacher also in

terms of revealing what had been assumed about the pre-service teacher's knowledge) and how the interaction around the experience could move the learning forward in a way that contributed to growth.

17th January 2017

I have done a text search for unpack and debrief. I found I had already done one fro reflect/reflection. I have also got nodes for planning and conversation and have printed these off. In reading through the coding summaries I noted:
To be able to reflect you need the language/ context/ detail sense of what observing
Knowledge helps say of children and poverty, children's backgrounds, trauma
Experience from which to draw growth, say moving from mat chaos
Language: Can't reflect without the language tools and the framework within which to use this language appropriately and in an educative way that contributes to LEARNING to teach.
The detail and specificity, unpacking the curriculum, teaching decisions; planning conversations – forming language and thinking
Debrief: asking why? How improve in the future, next time
Feedback moves from telling and glib questions to invitational questions where the pre-service teachers do the thinking. …
Went back over what I had been reading to consider the main points:

1. Teacher mentor has got to be reflective of SELF, articulating what do is HARD, asking WHY – justifying and explaining own teaching practice
2. Pre-service teachers have to SEE and talk about the DETAIL of what is happening – develop the language of the detail in order to build capacity to be REFLECTIVE
3. Teachers (most) consciously avoiding glib Questions; the glib answers – getting pre-service teachers to describe, analyse and think forward to new action (improvement)
4. Not giving an answer (direction/telling) but encouraging metacognition – has to be the pre-service teacher who does the thinking.
5. In the end they have to think, analyse and work from their own style and their own view of what counts as improvement
6. Focus on the students/children and their LEARNING – this is the bottom line
7. Capacity to become comfortable, complacent, automatic and non-thinking about practice (cf Dewey flat earth) must use observation and analysis (why?)
8. Planning as context for building language of practice and background for debriefing conversations and forward planning to future action
9. Feedback about asking questions not giving information advice or telling

1st February 2017

What I want to record here is why I changed the theme heading Reflection as thinking pedagogically to Reflection as building the language of teaching. The two sections here are describing the teachers becoming more articulate bout their own practice – that is finding the language to talk about what they do and then helping the pre-service teachers see what is going on in the classroom – AND in seeing finding the language to talk about it. Something about having the language helps with the seeing and lays down as it were the sediment or layers the teachers talk about that they go to in order to make decisions in the moment or reflect in action! All of this builds from my reading of the coded extracts summarized above.

2nd February 2017

The process of writing makes me think more and more about the sense I am making of the data and what the key points actually are – what I mean, or the meaning I am making from the

data. There are so many potential threads and the more one reads the data the more threads I see.

7th April 2017

I have competed listening to the interviews and making a grid summary of main impressions under the headings Relationships, Reflection, Responsibility. Reciprocity and other notes. What have I noticed?

Almost immediately it was the stress on the importance of learning in and from experience and time. This is talked about in a variety of ways; more time in the school means see the flow over time; time to build trust and rapport for children who need to believe in your stability; relationships underpin everything and take time to develop; time to learn from experience, make mistakes in safe ways; build up to teaching slowly; time to have conversations in which to learn; to question what observing; to visit other classes. Behaviour management has to be learned from experience, for most relationships are critical here and many mentioned personalities and aspects of this learning that 'can't be taught' or are hard to teach. In some cases this seemed to come back to how the pre-service teacher dealt with feedback.

Another feature was the challenge for some in answering questions from the position of a teacher of teaching. They would default to talking about the kids and their class from the teacher-children point of view. I notice that in some interviews I am stressing the 'you are a teacher of teaching' angle but some have clearly not seen themselves in this way. Linked to this it is interesting to note the responses where assumptions of being able to be around teaching will lead to learning. That is there is not a focus for modelling but an assumption that important matters will be 'seen'. Other teachers talk about directing the looking, sequencing the experiences, judging readiness, noting progress and so on. For some having more time to 'hang out with us' is sufficient.

Since the methodology discussions of deconstruction and post-structuralism I got a sense when reading extracts in context that have been previously coded say for reflection that taking extracts out of their meaning context does in a shaded way alter very infinitesimally the meaning. Something to think about.

NVivo Memos

23/10/2015 1:07 PM

After a morning of coding I'm thinking about how when you add nodes you need to go back and do some re coding because it means you see things previous participants have said in a slightly new way.

4/11/2015 9:36 AM

I have begun to work on a coding tree for responsibility with scaffold under sequence of learning and explicit under intention.

4/11/2015 9:38 AM

Doing to coding comparison just on Chloe's interview has indicated while there is substantial agreement between RMR and RMR2 coding there are a few that Kappa says are no better than chance. I will need to take a closer look at the texts in question to see what the detail shows. What I am thinking about now is that I need to be careful when coding to not try to do too much because you do fade out of concentration. Also the face validity check table on the responsibility tree nodes has alerted ne to some issues with coding some text in a free for all way into more than one node. While this might at times be legitimate it also has the capacity to muddy the waters and a good

example of this is the distinction between sequence of learning and scaffolding. ?It will be better to keep the latter for references solely and explicitly to 'scaffold' and 'release of responsibility' and have this as a specific sub set to the broader matter of having a view (and sometimes an emerging view) about sequencing the learning for the pre-service teacher.
I probably also need to capture the fact that intentionally sequencing the learning (for instance work with individuals, small groups before whole class, routines before teaching and so on) seems to be varied even across the first 8 coded interviews. There is a continuum of understanding here. This is also the case for being intentional around focusing the pre-service teacher's observation of practice.
The other emerging idea that I want to capture here but am not coding for explicitly yet are the comments being made about the way you talk with the pre-service teacher about their practice. The delicate balance between being honest (a concept with a node!) and being careful to maintain confidence and trust. Sometimes this appears to link with the teacher making themselves 'vulnerable' in admitting their own mistakes, or better debriefing how an aspect of their teaching observed by the pre-service teacher might be improved on.

There are also links to Levinas here.

21/01/2016 1:02 PM
I have just finished coding Jill's interview and am struck by the generality of this older teacher compared to most of the younger ones. So much about teaching teaching vague in her head and left to chance in her practice. Interesting on a continuum that looks at responsibility. Even her modelling was serendipitous.

7/03/2016 11:51 AM
Today I have been reading three coding summary by node reports re conversations; relationships with PiTE and memories of own PE experience. This to write paper for Oslo. Just wanted to record how reading these coded extracts makes you think of things in new ways. One example was the importance of learning from the detail (Judy) connected to the understanding that pre-service teachers often do not see this detail. Also the issue of avoidance of hard conversations and learning to have them and how important they are. Another observation is the times participants draw on their experience of teaching kids and see relevance for teaching the pre-service teacher.

22/10/2015 9:41 AM
On Wednesday 21st I coded all the interviews against the node responsibility in a yes /no fashion in terms of whether they used the word themselves in respect to working with the pre-service teachers (as opposed to the children in their classrooms which was the other main way the term came up). The text search I had done made this work much easier as I was able to read a printout and determine in advance which interviews contained this kind of data.
Today I will recode all of Adrienne and Alan's interviews and think more about what might be inferred as representing the teacher's sense of responsibility for the pre-service teacher's learning about teaching.

21/01/2016 9:37 AM

Got rid of duplicate nodes after checking content [explicit; teacher as learner; knowing the pre-service teacher as learner]
Have added trust as a node yesterday and must go back to previous interviews to check possible gaps. today added consistency as a node.

24/02/2016 9:56 AM
Responsibility first code
I have coded the first three interviews and I am wondering if i am putting too much into this theme. As a concept it underscores the role and of almost everything seems relevant. The point is how do the teachers demonstrate that they are taking responsibility for the student teachers' learning. I have isolated some things but then notice others such as their view of what to assess in terms of progress. The criteria I put on my map are: concern for the learner seeing the pre-service teacher as a learner; relationship with the pre-service teacher; being planned and intentional in their approach to what to do with the pre-service teacher, having a sense of what the priorities are for focus; not wanting the pre-service teacher to be a replicate of themselves, and finally having a view that still a learner and keep on learning

Appendix G
List of Coded Nodes with Frequencies

See following page

Printed 4/2/16

Nodes

Name	Sources	Referen	Created On	Modified On	Desc
Interview topics	0	0	15/07/2015 3:20	7/10/2015 2:21	
Experiences drawn on	6	34	15/07/2015 3:28	1/11/2015 4:30	
Challenges	28	100	15/07/2015 3:29	31/01/2016 3:28	
Assessment of pre-servic	29	172	15/07/2015 3:29	31/01/2016 3:06	
Connections with uni wor	30	150	15/07/2015 3:30	31/01/2016 3:39	
Focus on student learnin	29	182	15/07/2015 3:30	31/01/2016 3:08	
How teach PiTEs	30	312	15/07/2015 3:31	31/01/2016 3:20	
Vague about focus	7	14	27/01/2016 10:1	31/01/2016 12:0	Teach
Can't be taught	5	16	25/01/2016 10:0	29/01/2016 3:03	Teach
What PiTE's need to lear	30	154	15/07/2015 3:31	31/01/2016 2:54	
Values beliefs attitudes	30	115	15/07/2015 3:32	31/01/2016 2:58	
Insights into own teachin	28	92	15/07/2015 3:32	31/01/2016 3:24	
Teaching about relations	28	187	15/07/2015 3:33	31/01/2016 2:54	
Knowledge and skills nee	28	121	15/07/2015 3:34	31/01/2016 3:17	
Why teachers say no	26	85	22/10/2015 9:35	31/01/2016 3:34	What
Still to learn about role	26	92	7/10/2015 2:22	31/01/2016 3:41	What
Cases	0	0	15/07/2015 3:21	15/07/2015 3:21	
Experience	19	48	18/10/2015 11:4	31/01/2016 1:58	Emp
Attitude to taking on a PiTE	29	91	18/10/2015 11:1	31/01/2016 3:24	How
CT and Mentor roles	17	146	26/10/2015 10:1	31/01/2016 3:35	Men
Encourage to see other teach	11	21	18/10/2015 12:0	30/01/2016 3:31	Teaa
Conversations	27	124	18/10/2015 11:4	31/01/2016 3:17	Teac
Modelling	24	99	18/10/2015 3:20	31/01/2016 2:42	Teac
Decision making	5	7	18/10/2015 3:35	29/01/2016 9:23	Teac
Subject knowledge	16	33	18/10/2015 11:2	31/01/2016 3:09	Teac
Flexibility	13	21	18/10/2015 12:1	31/01/2016 2:58	Teac
trust	5	13	19/01/2016 3:39	31/01/2016 2:55	Teac
Questions	23	67	18/10/2015 12:1	31/01/2016 1:32	Teac
Feedback	21	81	18/10/2015 11:5	31/01/2016 3:17	Teac
collaborative planning	14	48	18/10/2015 3:51	29/01/2016 2:09	Teac
Presence	13	38	18/10/2015 3:31	31/01/2016 12:0	Teac
Planning	24	105	18/10/2015 3:15	31/01/2016 3:20	Teac
time	16	43	18/10/2015 3:54	31/01/2016 3:28	Teac
Reciprocity team	19	42	22/10/2015 1:01	31/01/2016 3:30	Teac
Valuing the pre-service teache	11	19	23/10/2015 10:2	28/01/2016 2:56	Teac
Benefits of more time in schoo	27	133	22/10/2015 12:2	31/01/2016 3:43	Teac
Mentor and colleague teacher	7	32	22/10/2015 1:37	31/01/2016 3:37	Teac
Guidelines and standards	6	21	31/10/2015 2:05	31/01/2016 3:04	Teac
Standards	4	10	25/01/2016 12:5	31/01/2016 3:38	Teach
Assessment of students	19	95	22/10/2015 10:3	31/01/2016 12:2	Teac
Consistency	7	13	21/01/2016 11:0	28/01/2016 9:45	Teac
Finding own style	15	40	18/10/2015 4:09	31/01/2016 3:00	Teac
Pedagogical content knowled	20	64	18/10/2015 11:5	31/01/2016 12:2	Teac
Mature age	4	11	21/01/2016 12:3	29/01/2016 10:3	Teac

Nodes

Name	Sources	Referen	Created On	Modified On	Desc
School context	20	91	26/10/2015 10:1	31/01/2016 12:0	Teac
Confidence	15	52	31/10/2015 11:2	29/01/2016 2:33	Teac
Coaching	6	48	24/01/2016 12:1	31/01/2016 1:54	Teac
Observation	7	36	1/11/2015 3:59	31/01/2016 3:03	Teac
Reading the classroom	7	15	31/10/2015 3:26	30/01/2016 3:20	Teac
Layers	9	22	23/10/2015 12:3	30/01/2016 3:31	Teac
Honesty	9	27	22/10/2015 12:1	31/01/2016 2:57	Teac
Relationships	16	48	23/10/2015 9:40	31/01/2016 12:1	Teac
Knowing students well	30	205	22/10/2015 10:2	31/01/2016 2:47	Teach
Relationships with pre-se	14	39	18/10/2015 12:2	29/01/2016 10:2	Teach
Parents	16	43	23/10/2015 9:43	29/01/2016 2:21	Teach
Other staff	25	98	23/10/2015 9:44	31/01/2016 2:41	Teach
Responsibility	15	36	20/10/2015 10:1	31/01/2016 3:33	Teac
Sequence of learning	23	127	18/10/2015 3:48	31/01/2016 3:02	Teach
Scaffolding	10	25	22/10/2015 12:5	30/01/2016 3:54	Teach
Teacher as leaarner	26	112	3/11/2015 11:02	31/01/2016 2:51	Teach
Knowing Pre-service tea	26	185	3/11/2015 10:59	31/01/2016 2:45	Teach
Relationships with pre-se	21	67	3/11/2015 11:04	30/01/2016 3:54	Teach
Intention purpose	18	55	3/11/2015 11:04	30/01/2016 3:16	Teach
Explicit	16	40	3/11/2015 11:32	31/01/2016 2:52	Teach
Anecdotes	12	19	26/10/2015 9:46	31/01/2016 12:4	Teac
Behaviour	26	104	18/10/2015 11:3	31/01/2016 3:40	Teac
Initiative of pre-service teache	16	41	18/10/2015 12:5	29/01/2016 1:39	Teac
Reflection	24	136	18/10/2015 3:17	31/01/2016 2:25	Thnk

Appendix H

Nodes and Coding Rules

		Sources	References	Created On	Modified On		Description
Anecdotes		2	2	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers tell a story to illustrate a point
Assessment of students		6	28	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers direct pre-service teachers to learn about assessing children's work and progress
Attitude to taking on a PiTE		9	28	######## ####	######## ####		How teachers felt about taking on a PiTE student every week
Behaviour		9	38	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers' views on what pre-service teachers need to understand about managing behaviour and how they go about teaching this.
Benefits of more time in school		8	47	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers comment on the benefits the PiTE provided through putting pre-service teachers with more time in schools.
Cases		0	0	######## ####	######## ####		
collaborative planning		4	13	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher talks about pre-service teacher being part of a collaborative planning group
Confidence		4	18	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers refer to the pre-service teacher's confidence or the need for confidence
Conversations		8	51	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher - pre-service teacher conversations debriefing teaching experiences.
CT and Mentor roles compared		3	64	######## ####	######## ####		Mentor teachers who had both roles comment on distinguishing between them
Decision making		1	1	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher describes the choices and decisions they make
Encourage to see other teachers		3	6	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher encourages pre-service teacher to observe other teachers
Experience		6	24	######## ####	######## ####		Emphasis on learning in and from experience
Explicit		5	14	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers talk about making what they were doing and thinking explicit to the pre-service teacher
Feedback		7	35	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher gives feedback to pre-service student
Finding own style		4	8	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers encourage pre-service teachers to find own way, approaches, style

Flexibility		3	9	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher emphasises need to be flexible, adaptable, have contingency plans, make decisions in the moment, deal with the unexpected
Guidelines and standards		3	17	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers comment on using the documents or standards provided to support their work with the pre-service teachers
Honesty		5	23	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers talk about the importance of being honest with the pre-service teacher.
Initiative of pre-service teacher		6	24	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers want pre-service teachers to be proactive and show initiative
Intention purpose		3	11	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers talk about being purposeful in their teaching and making explicit what they are doing and why to both students and pre-service teachers
Interview topics		0	0	######## ####	######## ####		
Knowing Pre-service teacher as a learner		7	57	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers describe getting to know their pre-service teacher well in order to teach them and to support their learning
Layers		4	10	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers talk about the complexity of the classroom with the metaphor of layers
Mentor and colleague teacher meetings		3	15	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers comment on the value of getting together to share how they are going with their role of mentoring or teaching pre-servie teachers to teach,
Modelling		6	44	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher demonstrates or models some aspect of teaching for the pre-service teacher
Observation		1	5	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers talk about observing the pre-service teacher
Pedagogical content knowledge		4	18	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers help with design of content knowledge for teaching, adjusting content for students, differentiating content
Planning		8	44	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher talks about the importance of planning
Presence		5	7	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher talks about some aspect of 'presence' - voice, stand, dress, proximity, confidence
Questions		9	34	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher encourages pre-service teacher to ask questions and uses questions to promote discussion
Reading the classroom		2	9	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers talk about pre-service teachers either not noticing or being helped to notice what the teacher is doing.
Reciprocity team		5	12	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher talks about working collegially with the pre-service teacher - that they are a team in a sense.
Reflection		8	64	######## ####	######## ####		Thinking about teaching
Relationships		4	20	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers talk about the importance of forming relationships with the children, other staff, parents, and their own relationship with the pre-servie teacher
Responsibility		15	33	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers talk about their sense of being responsible for the pre-service teacher
Scaffolding		5	13	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers talk about scaffolding the learning for pre-service teachers and using the gradual release of responsibility model in teaching them how to teach
School context		3	11	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers make remarks that indicate that the context of the school, its leadership and so on are important factors
Sequence of learning		5	19	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher has a view about how to sequence the learning for the pre-service teacher
Subject knowledge		3	9	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher emphasis on subject knowledge - particularly secondary teachers

Teacher as learner		8	43	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher talks about being a continuing learner about teaching and still can make mistakes
time		6	16	######## ####	######## ####		Teacher talks about the time commitment involved with having a pre-service teacher
Valuing the pre-service teacher		5	9	######## ####	######## ####		Teachers comment of the value of working with a pre-service teacher over a year.

Appendix I

Table to Test 'Responsibility' Against Values, Attitudes and Beliefs - Extract

Node	Adrienne	Alan	Barbara	Carmel	Charles	Chloe	Christine	Claire	Diane
Values, attitudes and beliefs that a mentor or colleague teacher needs to have	Having that passion for teaching and helping young people. That willingness to learn, to always look at yourself, to continue to learn. I think yes we need to be lifelong learners to	Time, because it takes a lot more time out of your week when you've got a student because you're spending the afternoons, you're talking about what you're going to do. I think wanting to inspire the next group	They need to be committed, they need to be open-minded. I mean they need to be open-minded that here is someone who really wants to learn and how can I best support them to do that. But I think that everyone can achieve. Even if they are really struggling or you need to think back about how you're not maybe being explicit enough. Are you not putting the expectations out there of what you want them to do?	You need to be able to reflect on your own practice first, I think. You need to be extremely positive	I think mainly to show that you're human	You have to be positive and you have to want to do what you're doing. I think honesty,	They've got to be flexible. I think you have somebody that enters your classroom and may not take a lesson or establish relationships the way that you may do it, so you've got to allow that to happen and give them, I guess, the opportunity. But you've got to be flexible. You've got to give them the opportunity.	I guess it's encouraging people to continue learning, to see teaching as a continuum If we're expecting students to learn, then we should be expecting the same of ourselves, and if we're not experimenting with something and we're not having a go at something, what's the point? They need to have a positive outlook. They need to be very open and sharing, So you have to be very giving in that sense, prepared to share your	You need to be honest, but have a way of conveying what you need to convey, without being offensive. The main thing is to know that we're all on a journey and there's no expectation that everyone is going to be perfect at any stage in the journey. Whether it's your first year or your tenth year or you're nearly retired, there's still areas that we

	keep up-to-date. To be honest with yourself and the people you're working with.	of teachers too. So being current with what's going on as well, Relevant with what's new.	You need to be open to suggestions. Because there's not a right way to do everything. I think they need to be an expert themselves, well not an expert but have a strong passion and understanding of what they are teaching. They need to be flexible and adaptable as well					learning, your expertise, your resources, your classroom, your time.	can all improve.

Appendix J

Responsibility Node Tree Table

Nodes / concepts	Where defined	Coding rule	Illustrative quotes
Responsibility	Emerged inductively from thinking about the concept of intentionality and that this appears to demonstrate a sense of responsibility for the pre-service teacher's learning to teach. Followed this up with reading about the philosopher Levinas's views on responsibility.	Teachers talk about their sense of being responsible for the pre-service teacher	Also the biggest challenge for a colleague teacher - yeah, I think just having someone that you're responsible for, for that amount of time it is an extra duty. (Jackie) I think it's really, really important and you've got to make a commitment to put 100 per cent in and work with them. (Barbara) They have to be prepared to invest in a long-term project rather than just a short-term. A prac is a very short period of time, but the PiTE program is a long-term commitment. It's like getting a puppy. (Claire)
Scaffolding	Emerged inductively from interviews where teachers use this concept.	Teachers talk about scaffolding the learning for pre-service teachers and using the gradual	I did all the planning for them, but they did the activity that I wanted them to do - it also scaffolds it before it's the big step into taking a whole class. (Christine) You can't just say you can't do this. You do have to scaffold it for them.

		release of responsibility model in teaching them how to teach.	(Claire)
Knowing pre-service teacher as a learner	Emerged inductively from the interviews where teachers indicated they thought about the pre-service teacher as a learner	Teachers describe getting to know their pre-service teacher well in order to teach them and to support their learning.	With a recent prac student I just had, it was her third week out of five that I then sent her to another school for the day. I teed it up for her and I explained to the other school why we were doing it and what I wanted her to see and she went down for the morning block and then came back and she was able to compare the two. Do that too early and she wouldn't have got much out of that experience. (Alan) They're all different personalities, and how you deal with one might be totally different to how you approach another one or deal with another one. (Chloe) So they were identifying an area and often, it was the same thing that I was looking at, or - and if it was something different, it was just one other thing that was different. Then I'd say to them, and I'd also like you to be looking at this. I just think that they can be overwhelmed with having to focus on too many things. Do one thing and do it well. Then move your focus once that's fixed and you know that that's working well…(Diane)
Sequence of learning	Emerged inductively from the interviews when teachers talked about how they organised the pre-service teacher's learning over time.	Teacher has a view about how to sequence the learning for the pre-service teacher.	Then when it was time to start looking at unit planning, I was doing like a think-aloud with them. So I would say I'm going to the curriculum and I'm pulling this element down and I'm doing this, now I'm going here for my resources, so first of all modelling the process. When it was time for them to then implement a plan, we worked together to do it. I would share with them the scaffold or the structure that I would use for my unit planning. (Alan) So, I didn't want to just throw her straight in and say, you go for it, because I think it's good to see good practice. That was something I was conscious for. (Carmel)

Teacher as learner	Emerged inductively from the interviews as the teachers talked about themselves as learners about teaching	Teacher talks about being a continual learner about teaching and still can make mistakes.	I mean I'm still learning and I've been teaching for a long time. …I mean we all make mistakes. (Adrienne) I think as much as every teacher has their successes and their success stories, you've got to share your mistakes. Because I think that's how you learn a lot as well. Whatever - what didn't work there? What would I try next time with that student? I didn't realise that was a trigger for that student or whatever it was. (Charles)
Relationship with pre-service teacher	Emerged as significant in the work prior to the research and was hence an interview topic question, it is also noted as significant in the literature, but was also raised as a priority by in the interviews before any specific question was asked.	Teachers emphasise the relationship with their pre-service teacher as foundational for teaching about teaching.	Building a good relationship with your colleague teacher and the prac student is so important too, isn't it? Knowing that, initially just building the trust with them, it's almost like a teacher with a student in the class, isn't it? In order to have that conversation you need to know that you're not being judged and the feedback is to help them with improving their practice and it's also okay for them to ask me questions and question why did you put them in those groups and why did you deal with that behaviour that way. I think that's a key as well, making sure you've got the relationship with the student. (Alan) We had a relationship with these students as well, so we had a high level of trust in what we were getting them to do. They also knew what we needed from them … (Claire)
Intention / purpose	Emerged inductively from the interviews as teachers talked about the planned and purposeful way they approached their work with the pre-service teachers*	Teachers talk about being purposeful in their teaching and making explicit what they are doing	So while we were planning we had our curriculum mix in the plan, we had why we were doing things in the plan, what our goals were. So it was a matter of breaking those down into child friendly language. So it was a matter of talking it through together. (Barbara) I guess in me prompting them it was around pointed prompting, that real direction of identifying and linking in with the structure that the program had, finding ways to tap into and make sure that they saw what I wanted them to see in the school rather than just their own agenda that seemed - sort of opening those blinkers to the wider context of where they were.

			(Claire)
Explicit	Emerged inductively from the interviews as teachers used this concept to describe how they taught pre-service teachers	Teachers talk about making what they were doing and thinking explicit to the pre-service teacher	I tried to make sure that I was really explicit to her about why I was doing everything. (Barbara) …so it's about they need to be good communicators, they need to be patient, they need to be good at their practice and good at unpacking their practice and being explicit in terms of going - the informal conversations I've had with colleague teachers around just ask them what they want to see or I'd tell them what the student teacher wanted to see. Again, I'd encourage them to name it up at the beginning. Have them look at what I do with this today. (Claire)

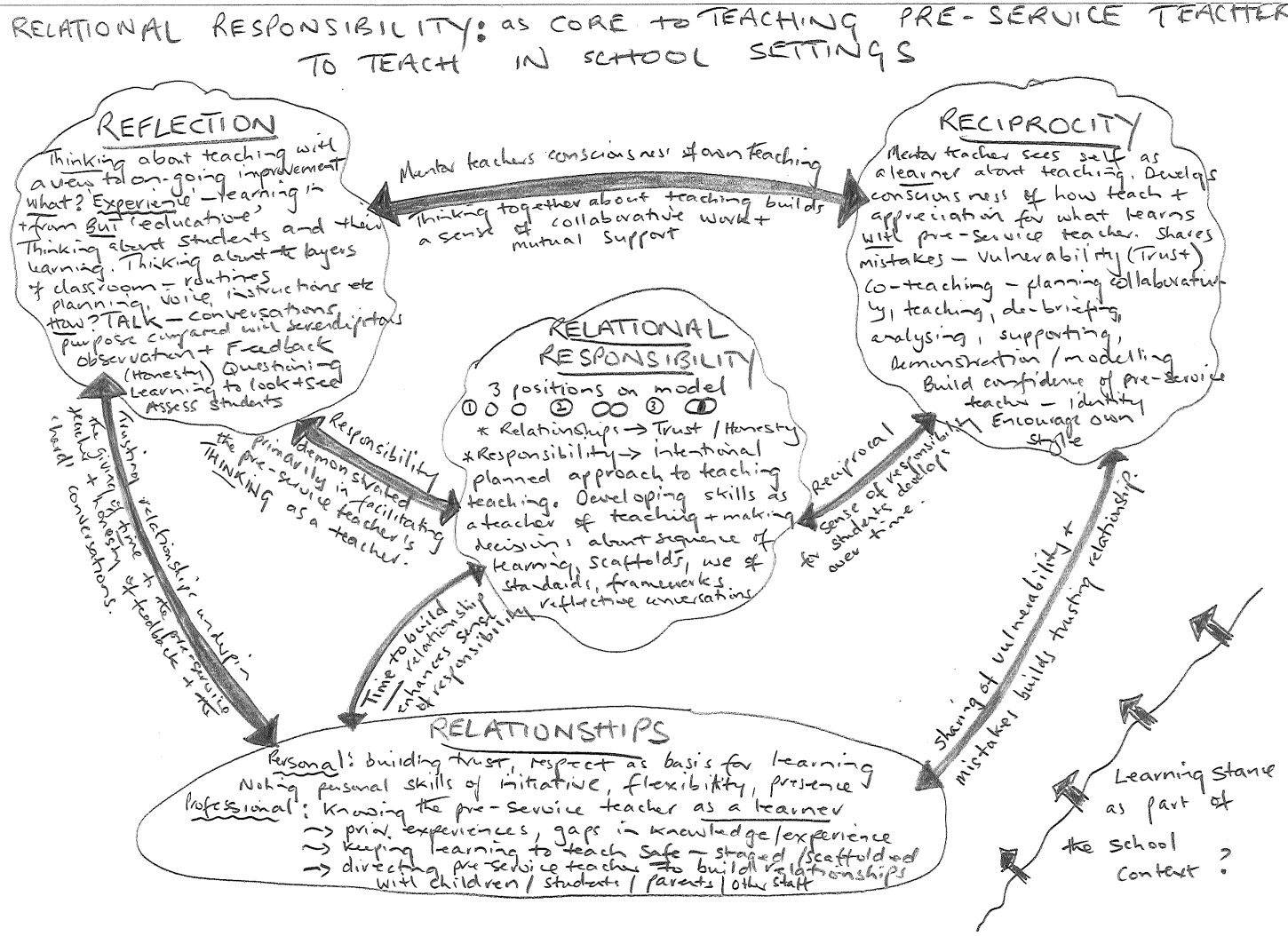
Text marked with -------- is not the exact term but is synonymous
*Also important to note that there is a thread that addresses the growth of intentionality over the life of the project and some teachers in interview comment about how they might improve on their focus or purpose in various aspect of their role.

Appendix K

Diagram to Support Thinking About Relational Responsibility

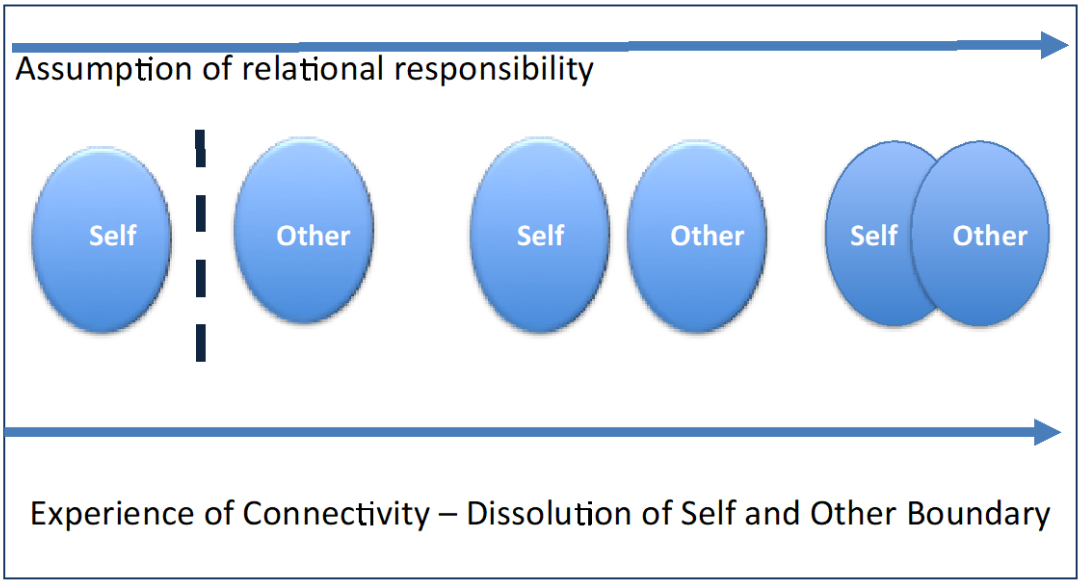
Dated May 2017

See following page


RELATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY: as CORE to TEACHING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS TO TEACH IN SCHOOL SETTINGS
REFLECTION
Thinking about teaching with a view to on-going improvement
what? 'Experience' – learning in + from BUT 'reeducative'
Thinking about students and their learning. Thinking about the layers of classroom – routines planning, voice, instructions etc
How? TALK – conversations purpose compared with serendipitous observation + Feedback (Honesty) Questioning Learning to look + see Assess students
RECIPROCITY
Mentor teacher sees self as a learner about teaching. Develops consciousness of how teach + appreciation for what learns with pre-service teacher. Shares mistakes – Vulnerability (Trust) Co-teaching – planning collaboratively, teaching, de-briefing, analysing, supporting, demonstration / modelling Build confidence of pre-service teacher – identity Encourage own style
Mentor teachers consciousness of own teaching
Thinking together about teaching builds a sense of collaborative work + mutual support
RELATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
3 positions on model
① ② ③
* Relationships → Trust / Honesty
* Responsibility → intentional planned approach to teaching. Developing skills as a teacher of teaching + making decisions about sequence of learning, scaffolds, use of standards, frameworks. reflective conversations
Responsibility demonstrated primarily in facilitating the pre-service teacher's THINKING as a teacher.
Reciprocal sense of responsibility develops for students over time.
Trusting relationship underpin the giving + receiving of feedback + the pre-service teacher's learning conversations.
Time to build relationship enhances sense of responsibility
Sharing of vulnerability + mistakes builds trusting relationship.
RELATIONSHIPS
Personal: building trust, respect as basis for learning
Noting personal skills of initiative, flexibility, presence
Professional: knowing the pre-service teacher as a learner
→ prior experiences, gaps in knowledge/experience
→ keeping learning to teach safe – staged / scaffolded
→ directing pre-service teacher to build relationships with children / students / parents / other staff
Learning Stance as part of the School Context ?

Appendix L

Diagram to Illustrate the Assumption of Relational Responsibility and the Experience of Connectivity Between Self and Other



This diagram draws on a model used by Hlava and Elfers (2014) that is a visual representation of the self-other connection. They in turn sourced the model from Aron, Aron and Smollan (1992). In this use of the model the 'self' stands for the mentor teacher and the 'other' stands for the pre-service teacher. The top arrow represents the assumption of relational responsibility. The bottom arrow represents the experience of connectivity and the dissolution of the self/other boundary.

Appendix M

Extract from Matrix

Interview	Relationships	Reflection	Responsibility	Reciprocity
Adrienne	Not friend; draw that line; boundaries; Rapport; be self; honesty; Connect with other staff	Discuss it later; scenarios; debrief give time; shorthand evidence; Need to look at ourselves; time for talk	Getting to know students as learners – breaking things down Feels responsibility CT = Full role in itself	We all make mistakes; need to question look at ourselves
Alan	Stories about how to build relationships with students; get to know the kids the first thing	Thinking aloud in the process of teaching; reviews practice	Building trust with them in order to have honest conversations and ask questions; experience as a pre-service teacher being left to learn from experience has led to a heightened sense of responsibility for thinking about how to scaffold the pre-service teacher's learning to teach.	Work along side; that didn't go so well; still have bad lessons; work together on planning; learning behaviour has to be done in tandem
Barbara	Essential – parents, kids, staff detail of modelling and co-work	Used 'debrief' and 'reflection'. Important for the student to do the thinking	'Commitment' responsibility for pre-service teacher's learning. All can learn, positive expectations.	Modelling, shared work, independent work. Co-planning valuing contribution; importanc of student initiative to take practices up.
Carmel	Big emphasis on building relationships with kids, basis for behavior management; importance of relationship between CT and student so that	Emphasis on talk rather than writing reflections; also emphasis on questioning rather than telling; important to reflect on own practice	Sequence focus on the little things, the details, and build to focus on teaching and learning. But also noted needed to think more about focus for modelling; seeig whole year planning and design back.	Provides ideas to team planning. Good to hav 'an extra pair of hands' – could work with some students wouldn't normally work with; someone to bounce ideas off; Values what student bringing from course work.

	student comfortable to ask questions. Collegial support			
Charles	Big emphasis on relationships and consciously building social skills; belonging in the classroom; relationship as underpinning behavior; But "don't think everyone comes into teaching with the ability to build relationships" With pre-service teacher for honesty	Share mistakes and how you learn from them	Talking in the moment about what did and why – asks questions to get pre-service teacher thinking	Learning together re backward planning at school Pl
Chloe Mentor & CT	Big emphasis on, most important learning for pre-service teachers; time takes, time for	liked being reflective about own teaching asking why? Importance of talking abut experience; focus now on student learning	Way clarity about role grew over time. Focusing observations; getting deeper questioning, getting the student to be the thinker	From the mentor perspective not the same development of reciprocity
Christine Ex PiTE	With children; going deeper with the class; assessments; rapport with CT impt. Wider school community also - team	Good definition – thinking, improve;	Sense of a sequence for the learning; best experience	Capacity to collaborate and share the classroom, 'extra pair of hands'. BUT difficu conversations!
Claire Mentor	With Kids; group of pre-service teachers talk!! Knitting; Teams, collegial network is school; manage relationships with staff; Like getting a puppy!	Debriefing, unpacking, reflecting. Group meetings knitting everything together. Journey of learning. focus	Negotiation of focus; communication with CT's (area for improvement); Impt of the CT the 'responsibility' of the role. Need to be gentle!	From the mentor perspective not the same development of reciprocity
Diane Mentor	Stress relationship between CT and PiTE; supported the CT's Having a sense of the PiTE as a learner; interpersonal skills of CT important; trust; honesty	Learn from mistakes; through questions getting PiTE to focus on the details	Moved two students because of relationships with CT Observing good practice and helping PiTE see what is going on plus opportunity to practice; "one area at a time"	Team planning and conversations about children's progress

Elizabeth Ex PiTE Colours = same school	Built relationship with PiTE; impt of having an approachable manner with kids; fit personality/own style/can't copy; relationships with staff – ease of work – build reputation in school Impt to be fair and consistent with kids; impt of 'small' conversations – corridor, duty – time impt. …. = key words	As a PiTE inquiry and data oriented her to being very reflective; impt re how interpret data; improving practice Having a student makes me constantly reflect (detail); good to have reflective conversations (talk more impt than seeing?)	Expectation is school – breeding the next generation. Ex PiTE –slow and scaffolded; seeing how small details fit in larger picture; modeled + reflective conversations; letting go hard Readiness – detail re progress Planning has to be immaculate; vr clear indicators of progress – giving feedback	They feed in their ideas Learning with the PiTE! Pressure; sharing uncertainty Supportive and equal relationship; mutual questioning; a team teaching role; see struggling; be part of team planning and contributes

Colours of participants indicate from the same school
…. Indicates key ideas